

The Critic

*An Illustrated Monthly Review
of Literature Art and Life*

Vol. XLII

FEBRUARY, 1903

No. 2

The Lounger

I HAVE received the enclosed card from the genial humorist and versewriter, Charles Henry Webb, alias "John Paul":

CHAS. HENRY WEBB,

DEALER IN

SOFT AND BITUMINOUS VERSES

AND

HARD AND HUMOROUS COAL.

NANTUCKET.

Swain's Wharf.

Together with the card is a bill-head which reads as follows:

Charles Henry Webb,
President and Literary Adviser.

Frederick Coffin Ayers,
Secretary and Shoveller.

Nantucket, Mass., _____ 190

To AMATEUR COAL CO., Dr.

Terms Cash, or Approved Verses. Office, Head of Swain's Wharf.

It seems to me a great pity that Mr. Laurence Housman should have denied the authorship of "An English Woman's Love Letters" if he intended so soon to own up to it. I suppose that an author has a right to print a book without his name if he wants to, and if he does not wish to be known there

is nothing to do but to deny the soft impeachment when he is accused of its authorship. The example of Scott is always pointed out, but Scott had better reasons for his deception than Mr. Housman. I do not think that he has helped his reputation by the flat denial and quick confession of the authorship of "An English Woman's Love Letters." The public resents being made a fool of. The women, and men too, who read these letters with ill-concealed emotion feel as if they had been duped, and that they owe Mr. Housman a grudge for having played upon their sympathies. It will, I imagine, take him some time to reinstate himself with the public.

The entertaining Mr. G. K. Chesterton, writing in the Christmas number of the English *Bookman*, says: "There is no such thing as what may be called the poetic type; that as a matter of fact the features of a poet do not necessarily differ from those of a stock broker." The *Tribune* of this city thinks that this is an exaggeration. "As a matter of fact," says a writer in that journal, "few men not poets have the peculiar brow of your born poet, and Mr. Chesterton leaves out of account the most important feature of

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ENTERED AT NEW ROCHELLE, N. Y., POST OFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER.



Photo by Harrison, Chicago
THE LATE MARY HARTWELL CATHERWOOD

should be supposed to need the kind of advertising that is given to the Totty Coughdrops of the theatrical profession.

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Mrs. Mary Hartwell Catherwood, who died at her residence in Chicago in December last, was born in Luray, O., in 1847. She had published sixteen books, and was a contributor to the leading magazines. On another page will be found a critical estimate of Mrs. Catherwood's work, which was in type in THE CRITIC office before her untimely death.

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I met an author the other day, who told me that it has cost him about a hundred thousand dollars to be an author. Authors nowadays are apt to make that sum in the course of a year or two, if they happen to be novelists, but it is not often that you hear an author confess that it has cost him money to follow his profession. This particular author writes books of historic learning that are of great value, but they have not a very large circulation. Every book that he has written he has put in type at his own expense to see how he likes it, and then if it does not suit him he has the type distributed and begins anew. Sometimes he has the book bound and in every respect as complete as though it were to be sold over the counter—this just for the sake of criticising it. He has another profession than that of writing, but he has not followed it, because writing interests him more. It is, however, a dearly bought pleasure, but one that the lovers of books that are worth while have found as much to their entertainment as it has been to his.

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What a success Mark Twain would be as an actor if keeping before the public goes for anything! It is almost impossible to pick up a paper without seeing some extraordinary anecdote about him. One time he is offering a prize for an obituary of himself; another time he offers his skull to a university; and so it goes. I wonder if Mr. Clemens is altogether to blame for this sort of paragraphing. It seems a pity that a man with his reputation

Speaking of histories, how few of those that we hear the most about have any large sales! Take the works of Francis Parkman, for instance. There are no books that have been written in America that we are more proud of than these histories, and yet many novels that are reckoned failures have larger sales than they have had. Once in a while a history makes a

popular success in the number of its sales, as, for instance, Green's "Short History of England," and, to go farther back, Macaulay, but it is seldom nowadays that histories sell in proportion to their value or their reputation.



Some time ago I published in this

In his "Life of Queen Victoria," which is an extension of his article in the "Dictionary of National Biography," Mr. Sidney Lee sets at rest the question as to Her late Majesty's favorite novelist. We have been brought up to believe that Miss Marie Corelli's stories were the Queen's favorites, but Mr. Lee tells us that



Photo by

Wright & Cook, Philadelphia

MR. GOUVERNEUR MORRIS

department the only photograph I could get of Mr. Gouverneur Morris, whose second book, "Aladdin O'Brien," has just appeared. It was not a good photograph, nor was it a good likeness of the young author. It is with pleasure, therefore, that I reproduce a new and better photograph and one that really looks like him.

there were no novels she enjoyed more than those of Mr. Marion Crawford, which is much more to her credit than the other story. The Queen may have read Miss Corelli, and she may have liked certain things about her books, for with all her faults she is not without power in the telling of a story, but her vagaries make the judicious grieve.



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McMichael & Gro

MR. MARTIN HARVEY IN "THE ONLY WAY"

I give these portraits of Mr. Martin Harvey not only because of their picturesqueness but because the characters are from "book plays." Mr. Harvey has just accepted a play written by Messrs. Lloyd Osbourne and Austin Strong.

22

The *Cornhill* for January contains Madame Bernhardt's first contribution to a magazine. It covers some sixteen pages, and the subject discussed is the moral influence of the theatre. Madame Bernhardt not only asserts that the theatre has a moral influence, but she proves it. Her article is most interesting, for besides her views and opinions it contains bits of autobiography that are lively reading.

22

It is well known that Madame Bernhardt has recently made a triumphal tour of Germany and the Netherlands. On her return to Paris she was interviewed by an eager press and gave her opinions with much frankness. The most interesting thing that she said was about the newspapers, which had not treated her altogether kindly. "I believe in discussing questions of art earnestly, even vehemently," she said. "If I were a journalist I think I would be very violent in the expression of my opinion. I would state my views frankly and boldly, but honestly and fairly, according to what I conceive the standard of art. But to indulge in virulent animosity, to print infamies merely for the sake of acquiring a vulgar reputation, is the very depth of baseness." There is no one who will disagree with Madame Bernhardt on this point. The press of all countries, she thinks, is at a pretty low ebb in this respect, particularly in the Latin countries, and she adds: "The only press that I think perfectly honorable, respectable, and up to the mark in its true mission is the press of England. Its characteristic attitude, impartial and respectful, treating of persons and things, is beyond praise." And she adds: "I do not know that any reptile, infamous press exists in England such as we have in other countries. My



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MR. MARTIN HARVEY IN "A CIGARETTE MAKER'S ROMANCE"

conviction is that the English newspapers are models of their kind. They hold a place in my opinion which no other press in the world can hold; and it would be well if their high standing, loyal character, and respect for truth and honesty were imitated more generally by the newspapers of other countries." It took some courage for Madame Bernhardt to say this, but she is nothing if not courageous. It is the truth, but there are a great many people who are afraid to speak the truth. Madame Bernhardt is not one of them.



The *Literary World* of Boston, which was started thirty-two years ago as a fortnightly and has since become a monthly, though published in its original form, has been taken over by Messrs. L. C. Page & Co., the young and enterprising publishers of that city, who have secured Mr. Bliss Carman as their editor. Mr. Page tells me that he does not intend to make any radical changes at first, but as time goes on he hopes to do much to improve the character and appearance of his magazine. I doubt whether the



Photo by

Hopkins, Denver

MISS SARAH JOHNSON

Literary World has had any circulation to speak of, and yet it has probably paid its way, for it cost virtually nothing. Dr. Abbott, who has edited it for so many years, wrote nearly everything in it. Its publisher and proprietor was, I believe, a bookkeeper in the office of the *Congregationalist*, and transacted most of his business there. There was no office rent to pay, no business manager to pay, the expenses were indeed nil, so the *Literary World* managed to hang on and not become involved in debt.



Miss Sarah Johnson, whose picture I take pleasure in presenting to the readers of THE CRITIC, is the winner in a \$350.00 prize short-story contest. That Miss Johnson should win so comfortable a prize is not of itself a matter of astonishment, as every prize must be won by some one, if it is won at all. It is the fact that she follows the humble occupation of cooking that makes it remarkable that she should win a prize in literature. It is said that since winning this prize Miss Johnson is inclined to turn her back upon pots and pans and devote her life to pens and ink. I am afraid she is making a mistake; it is better to be a good cook than a good story writer. The rewards of literature are evasive; the rewards of the cook are sure.



Miss Alice Hegan, the author of "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," was married on the 18th of December last to Mr. Cale Young Rice, the Kentucky poet. Miss Hegan spent part of her honeymoon in New York. "Mrs. Wiggs" is, I believe, her first book, and is one of the most striking instances of the success of a first book. The Century Co. are not giving figures about the sale of the book, but I have reason to know that few of the "boomed" novels have reached the sales of "Mrs. Wiggs." Fifteen hundred copies a day is about an average.



Miss Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler has recently been interviewed by a writer

in the London *Daily Mail*. Either the interviewer, who signs the name May Bateman, is a genius at her work, or Miss Fowler lends herself most readily to the art of the interviewer. If all interviews were as clever as this one, interviewing would not be in the disfavor that it is. Miss Fowler confided to Miss (?) Bateman that the people she writes about are the people of her world, as it is much easier to write of the things you know than the things you have learned. "Things you have learned," she adds, "are things without; things you know are things within. I never take real persons as models, only types. Real people are so disappointing. I'm afraid if you met even a murderer in real life he'd develop some noble trait which would upset all your calculations." Even tiresome people, Miss Fowler thinks, are at times disappointing. "In a novel they'd be exquisitely true to their type all through. In real life they are n't. Have them to stay with you—and how disappointing they'll become! You get used to the mannerism—and they are n't nearly so tiresome as they ought to be—and when they go away you feel cheated. Characteristics are rather like clothes, after all. You don't always wear them. Like mackintoshes in fine weather, there are occasions they don't suit—and so you drop them."

Mr. John Kendrick Bangs has a big undertaking before him in the editorship of the *Metropolitan Magazine*; not but that he can change its character easily enough, for that simply means a different class of contributions and illustrations, but to convince the public that its character is changed will not be so easy a matter. The



MR. JOHN KENDRICK BANGS

Metropolitan has belonged to the class of "flashy" magazines, with now and again something of literary value in it, but not often. It was more devoted to pictures than to text, and the pictures hardly belonged to high art; they were mostly portraits of pretty women—belles of far-off towns or theatrical people. Mr. Bangs's idea is, I understand, to live up to the title of the magazine—*The Metropolitan*. The idea is an excellent one, for there is certainly enough going on in New York to fill a magazine with interesting material. In these days when magazines are more of a drug on the market even than poetry, one must strike out on new lines. Mr. Bangs has shown in the short time that he



MR. KIPLING'S NEW HOME, "BATEMAN'S," BURWASH, SUSSEX
 Sketched for THE CRITIC

had charge of *Harper's Weekly* that he is a good editor. I shall watch his career on *The Metropolitan* with much interest.

Mr. Kipling's "new home," writes an English correspondent, is at Bateman's in the village of Burwash, in the heart of a comparatively thinly settled and wooded district. Standing off the highroad near the headwaters of the river Rother, it is known as Bateman's; a historic house which bears a date stone over the door of 1634; and admirably it may be expected to suit the needs of Mr. Kipling and his family, in the very heart of the Sussex Downs, famous for that South-down mutton which is served in the plutocratic West End clubs of London.

The inhabitants of the village of Burwash have long been noted for their independence. It is related that when George IV. passed through the village *en route* to Brighton the joy bells were not rung, and upon inquiry by his chamberlain it was alleged that

on a former occasion no ale was bought for the ringers and that they were not going to give their services again for nought; not likely! From which it would appear that the worthy inhabitants had imbibed considerable of the spirit of what is commonly supposed to be the true Sussex motto, 'We wun't be druv'; crest, a hog. Mr. Kipling's removal hither from Rottingdean, since it is apparent that he intends making his home in England, will, no doubt, give him the seclusion or at least freedom from the gaze of the vulgar 'tripper'; who, truth to tell, rather overstepped the bounds of good-breeding in the curiosity which they evinced with regard to his domestic arrangements. Here he is ensconced in a delightful old manor-house with a typical village of Sussex cottages hard by, and the down looming up to the north, sheltering it from the northerly winds. As for the present aspect of the house itself,—beyond the fact that it is undergoing a general overhauling it is probably destined to remain as it originally was, except for an addition

at the rear made by the including of two oast-houses, those furnaces or kilns in which the hops, the growing of which is the chief industry of the

sketch was made every window being flung open and his two children, a boy and a girl, clad in a semi-Indian garb, were playing about the lawn. The

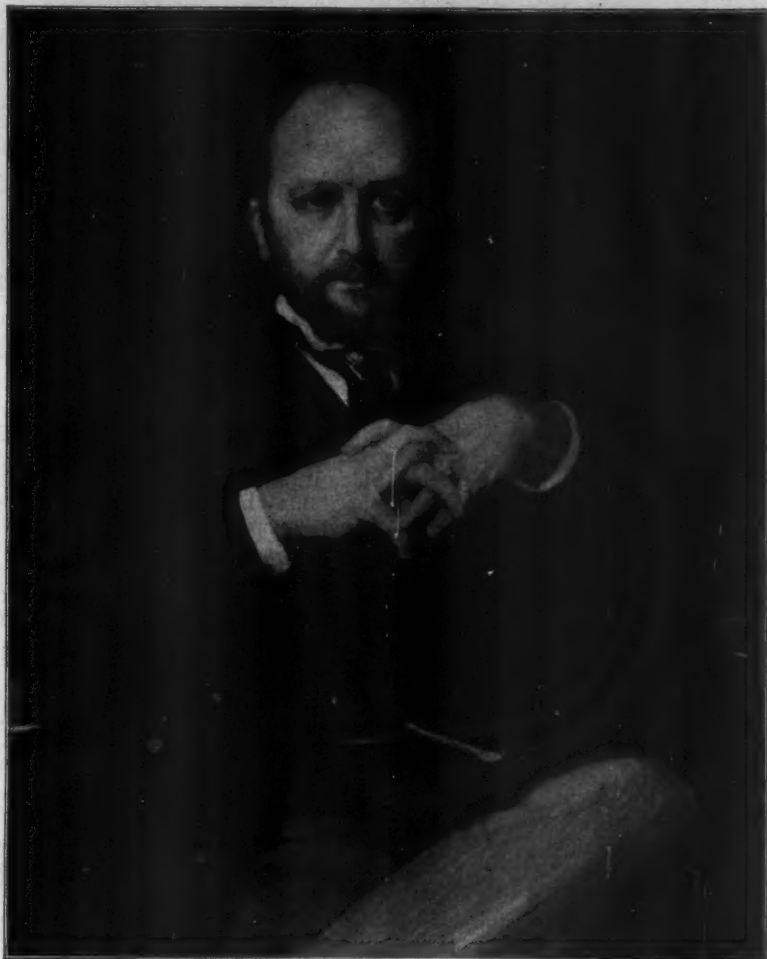


Photo by Hollyer, London

MR. HENRY JAMES

Courtesy of F. Keppel & Co.

Whose new serial, "The Ambassador," will be the first fiction published in the *North American Review*
(From the portrait by Mrs. Anna Lea Merritt)

neighborhood, are stored. What a fine study they might be turned into, with their ample lofts and their queer, conical roofs! Mr. Kipling is evidently a believer in the fresh-air theory; on the occasion on which our

accompanying sketch was made on the spot in the summer of 1902, just after Mr. Kipling had taken possession, and is in every way truthful and accurate representations of the subject."

From *The Sphere*

COUNT TOLSTOY AT THE PLOUGH. BY A RUSSIAN ARTIST

"The time will come," says Tolstoy, "when men will be convinced of the truthfulness of my teaching. And then, without doubt, they will adopt a different and a better formula of progress. Then the struggle with nature, now so burdensome, will be made lighter, and we shall be able to attain a higher and more general state of happiness."

While the *North American Review* has never published fiction, it has the example of the leading literary review of the world, the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, which is seldom without serial fiction running through its pages,—very often American fiction translated by Th. Bentzon. I understand that this clever Frenchwoman is going to put Mrs. Humphry Ward's "Lady Rose's Daughter" into French for the *Revue*. What with Mrs. Ward's serial running through the French *Revue*, and Mrs. Wharton's "Valley of Decision" running through the *Nuova Antologia*, the leading literary review of Italy, native talent will have to look to its laurels.

Notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Swinburne has told Mr. Andrew Lang in so many words that he does not know anything about Dickens, that gentleman has had the hardihood to write an article, and a most interesting one, on Dickens, for the *Booklovers Magazine*. Mr. Lang may not know his subject, but he knows how to write entertainingly about it, and he says many true and interesting things in the course of his article.

Mr. Lang places "Great Expecta-

tions" next in rank to "David Copperfield." I don't know but that I would place it ahead of "David Copperfield," but it may be because "Great Expectations" was the first story of Dickens's that I ever read, and I have never shaken off the hold it had upon me. It was published originally in this country as a serial in *Harper's Weekly*, with illustrations by McLean, an artist long since dead. I read it every week as it appeared, and it was more a part of my life than any book that I had ever read up to that time, with perhaps the exception of "Franklin's Autobiography."

It is said that Björnstjerne Björnson received over five hundred telegrams on his seventieth birthday. Besides this he received numerous addresses, among them one from the Norwegian National Theatre, and another from the people of Denmark containing over thirty thousand signatures. Altogether December eighth was a great day in Christiania.

Mr. Benjamin Swift has the hardihood to bring out a new novel on the top of his essay on "The Decay of the Novel." "In Piccadilly" is the title

of the new book, which will be published by Mr. Heinemann in London, and Messrs. Putnam in New York, during the course of the present month. The title sounds more attractive than those that Mr. Swift usually selects for his books.

For a year or more I have had this portrait of Miss Nance O'Neill, waiting for an excuse to publish it. Miss O'Neill has not acted in America during that time, but lately she has appeared in England, without success, however, I regret to say. I have never seen Miss O'Neill act, but I have heard her acting praised by judicious critics. She certainly has a very striking face, not unlike that of Miss Blanche Bates, if one may judge by this photograph.

The following advertisement appeared in a recent issue of the *New York Evening Post*. To comment upon it would be to gild refined gold.

BULFINCHES

Whistling many songs of stately hymnal measures and ragtime dashes, including, "Maiden! Be Mine," "Bridal Wreath," "America," "How Can I Leave Thee," "Let's Be Merry, Comrades," "Where the Blue Waters Sparkle." These are the most tame, affectionate, and beautiful birds. Prices reduced to \$25, \$40, \$50, \$75, \$100.

The Campanini Holden Canary is a great song canary, very soft and varied trills, bells, and flute notes, \$8, \$10, \$15, \$20. St. Andreasbergs, fancy notes, \$5 and \$6. Hartz Canaries, \$2.00, \$2.50, and \$3.00, each guaranteed to sing to suit. Females in breeding order, \$1.00 and \$2.00. Breeding pairs, \$3.00, \$3.50; breeding cage, \$1.75, \$2.00, and \$5.00. Large variety semi-religious talking parrots, the most profane one only \$200.00. Any one writing for a list of his oaths, please inclose at least \$1. Birds sent everywhere by express. Holden's new Book on Birds. All about mating, food, and care. By mail for 25 cents, stamps.

Sig. Mascagni is going to write a book. It would seem in this country as though the only equipment necessary for a man or a woman is to be advertised—how they are advertised makes no matter—to make them eligi-



Photo by Arnold Genthe

MISS NANCE O'NEILL

San Francisco

ble as authors. Mascagni's name has appeared in the papers in various unpleasant connections ever since he arrived in this country. Of course a book was inevitable. The notorious Florence Burns and Roland Molineux are each reported to be engaged in the pursuit of literature. It is fortunate that the brute who murdered an inoffensive child in Mount Vernon



Courtesy of

MR. A. W. PINERO

*The Academy and Literature*

MR. RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

(As caricatured by Mr. Max Beerbohm)

recently ended his own life at the same time; otherwise he would in all probability be added to the list of authors. How such people can find publishers passes understanding, but of course the publishers that they do find are not of the class that has helped to build up American literature.

There is a great rage in England at the present moment for sixpenny editions of popular novels. One firm, Messrs. Chatto & Windus, have sold one million books since they have taken up the sixpenny idea, and it is their opinion that it is the best books that sell the most. They point to Charles Reade's masterpiece, "The Cloister and the Hearth," the sale of which amounted to nearly a quarter of a million. Even authors of the present day are thrown into the sixpenny hopper, Miss Fowler's "A Double Thread"

being one of the best sellers at this price. Sixpence is twelve cents of our money. We can do better than that in this country, where cloth bound books are sold for fifteen cents, and very decent-looking books too, and some in paper covers for five cents,—among the latter Anthony Hope's "Dolly Dialogues," which have had a large sale at that figure, though the book has also had a large sale at \$3.00. Mr. R. H. Russell is the publisher of a \$3.00 edition, with illustrations, that has been eagerly accepted, and Messrs. Holt, by whom the book was first published through arrangement with Mr. Hope, have a \$1.50 edition that still sells exceedingly well, this notwithstanding that the book can be bought for five cents, but strange as it may seem, there are people who do not care to read a five-cent edition of a favorite novel.



Courtesy of

MR. G. BERNARD SHAW

(As caricatured by Mr. Max Beerbohm)



The Academy and Literature

MR. ROBERT HICHENS

The success of Professor Edward Howard Griggs on the lecture platform is proof positive that the lecture as a form of public entertainment has not become a thing of the past. Given a lecturer that the public wants to hear and it will go in crowds to hear him. Professor Griggs is comparatively a young man, as he was born as recently as 1868. He is not particularly profound; he is not perhaps so much of a scholar as the subjects of his lectures would indicate; but he knows how to interest an audience, and make his hearers think. He has the popular gift, and his books as well as his lectures appeal to vast audiences. His latest volume, "A Book of Meditations," contains a portrait of Professor Griggs by Albert Sterner, which I should have been very glad to reproduce in this column, but it was made with the distinct understanding that it was only to appear in the book.

How badly the newspapers treat us! They come out with a statement that somebody is going to do something that is most interesting, and we are delighted at the fact of its immediate realization. We have hardly made up our minds to it when in the next edition of the paper we see that there is no foundation for the story. Not long ago the newspapers printed a most elaborate and circumstantial account of a theatre to be built in Italy for Madame Duse. Well-known ladies in New York and Chicago had offered the money, and the theatre was to be built on the banks of Lake Albano, near Rome. The total amount of money raised was mentioned, and the amount that each lady put against her name was given. Now it seems that there is no truth in the story at all, and that Madame Duse is not to have a theatre in Italy unless she builds one for herself. It seems a pity, but then if she is only going to

play the plays of D'Annunzio it may be just as well. He may be a poet and a fine writer, but he is not a playwright. This fact was never borne in upon me more truly than when I wit-

pose. It was a great mistake on the part of Messrs. Liebler & Co. to give these performances in such a vast auditorium. A series of matinées might have been given at a small theatre if



"EMBERS"

(After the unpublished painting by Eastman Johnson)

nessed the performance of "Francesca da Rimini" at the Metropolitan Opera House. It was not because the Opera House was too large for a dramatic performance that the play did not seem real, but because some of the most elementary rules of dramatic construction were defied, and not to good pur-

the proper house could not have been had in the evening, and the performance would have been much more effective.



Mr. Morris Phillips, who was for so many years connected with the *Home*

A reader of THE CRITIC who modestly hides his identity behind the initials R. S. C. sends the following verses entitled "Embers" inspired by the illustration from the painting by Eastman Johnson, shown on the opposite page:

HE sits by the hearth and the fire is low,
And his thoughts are all of the Long Ago;—
When he was comely and straight and tall,
The pride of his kindred, and loved by all.
Loved? Ah, yes, but loved by one
Who was dearer than all,—whom he loved and won.
Patient and loving and gentle was Ruth:
But Death was his rival;—she died in her youth:—
And the babe that she bore him, he died too;
His years are so many, and hers were so few;
But Love lends warmth to the fading embers,
Youth may forget, but Age remembers.

[Old Man, loquiter:]

"And what is life when we've reached fourscore?
Embers, Embers and nothing more!
'Ashes to Ashes,'—that's what they say
When the end is come, and we're laid away.
Dust and Ashes, Ashes and Dust,
That's what we come to, and die we must.
A life beyond?—well, yes, in truth
That were a boon, for I might see Ruth:—
Ruth as she was, and mine to keep:
For short of that I would rather sleep,
Or sit as now by the dying embers;
Musing on her:—ah, Age remembers!"

R. S. C.

Journal, writes to correct a few errors in the paragraph about Mr. Dix and the *Home Journal*, printed in the January number of THE CRITIC:

That is a pleasant paragraph in THE CRITIC for January concerning Mr. W. F. Dix, but it contains two or three errors, which, in the interest of literary history, may be worth while calling attention to and correcting. You say that "Mr. N. P. Willis and George Morris started the *Home Journal* in 1846," whereas, the fact is that the *Home Journal* was started on St. Valentine's day, 1846, by George P. Morris, alone. Willis came in after, and, subsequently, a partnership was formed by the two men under the firm name of Morris & Willis. You were probably led into this error by the line which *Town and Country* keeps standing on its front page, viz.: "Successor to the *Home Journal*, founded in 1846 by N. P. Willis and George P. Morris." You say that "Mr. Dix is, in a way, a successor to the editorial chair of N. P. Willis," when the truth is that Mr. Willis neither figuratively

nor literally had an editorial chair in the *Home Journal* sanctum. George P. Morris was the editor, Mr. Willis a constant and regular contributor, the latter sometimes staying away from the office and not coming to New York at all for a whole year. He spent all of his time at his country seat, "Idlewild," on the Hudson. These two men would stay away from the office, simultaneously, twelve months or more, the concern at such times being under my editorial and business direction. While Willis was at "Idlewild," Morris, in summer, would remain at his country-seat, "Undercliff," at Cold Spring on the Hudson, passing the winter in the Southern States. I should know what I am talking about for I sat at neighboring desks with Morris for nine years, until he died; I was a co-laborer with Willis for thirteen years, and his partner for four years, until he died. Both were delightful men to be associated with, and I revere their memory, but it may as well be disseminated in so high an authority as THE CRITIC, and thus settle the question for all time that the *Home Journal* business firm during the last thirty

years of its existence was Morris, Phillips & Co. Prior to that, for four years, it was Willis & Phillips, and, prior to that, again, from its foundation in 1846 by Morris until his death in 1863, it was Morris & Willis; and, to touch on the main point again, the former was not a writer and the latter not an editor.

One of the most amusing incidents in "The Mummy and the Humming Bird," by Mr. Isaac Henderson, which was recently playing at the Empire Theatre, is the scene between Mr. John Drew as the Mummy and Mr. Lionel Barrymore as an Italian organ-grinder. Mr. Drew is supposed to speak nothing but English and Mr. Barrymore nothing but Italian, but they have a long, interesting conversation in which they seem to understand each other exceedingly well. The Italian tells his story, and the Englishman understands it.

This incident, I believe, is founded on fact. Mr. Hall Caine told a similar experience of his own to Mr. Henderson, and the latter has worked it out for the purposes of his play. It seems that some years ago, when Mr. Caine was in Italy, he went to see Rossi act. The tragedian did such splendid work that the English author was quite carried off his feet and sought an interview, forgetting that he knew no Italian and that Rossi probably knew no English. He was taken around behind the scenes after the player and introduced to the tragedian, with whom he spent an hour or more. Neither man spoke the language of the other, but they seem to have come to a pretty good under-

standing, and when Mr. Caine saw some of his friends later and told them that he had been having an interview with Rossi they were astonished, knowing that he knew no Italian. He confessed that he had forgotten that in the excitement of the moment, but said that with the few words that were alike in the two languages, and a large amount of gesture, they had a very pleasant interchange of compliments. This seems more probable than the way that Mr. Henderson has introduced the incident into his play. But it is effective and gives the audience a genuine thrill.

I have received from the editor of a Chicago "illustrated religious weekly paper for all classes" a circular letter which begins by invoking the grace of God upon me and mine. It says: "You will be a magnet for Jesus, helping draw all who will come to the cross, unto Him." Then it comes down to practical things, and mentions a complimentary clipping from a paper, which is enclosed, names its price, and adds that it would be pleased to exchange with THE CRITIC. Then with a disingenuousness that strikes one as strange in these days, adds: "We believe the insertion of enclosed notices in your paper would interest your readers, be profitable to yourself, and pleasing to God." It seems to me that this editor takes a good deal upon himself when he tells you that the puffing of his paper will be "pleasing to God." How does he know that it would?



The Current Drama

As seen by CARLO DE FORNARO



MR. MORGAN AND MISS ALLEN IN "THE ETERNAL CITY"



MR. SOTHERN AND YORICK'S SKULL IN "HAMLET"



MR. HACKETT AND MR. GEORGE LE SOIR IN
"THE CRISIS"



MR. AUBREY BOUCCICAULT AND HIS GREAT DANE
IN "HEIDELBERG"



STEPHEN CRANE À LA BEARDSLEY, BY FORNARO

Whims, that whisper a mystic WHAT;
 A liltesome line and a direful dot—
 Whether meaningful or whether not!

Our styles are indescribable, quite:
 The way he draws is the way I write.

B. J.

A Rose in Winter

By ROBERT LOVEMAN

TELL me, I pray thee, gracious Rose,
The burden of thy wintry woes,
Why now thou seemest to despair,
Within the florist's window there.
Is it, as I have often heard,
About, you know, Sir Mocking-bird?
Or doth thy soul this sadness see,
In dreams of beetle, and of bee,
Of June, and Noon, and Summer sky,
And gossips with the butterfly,
While in some happy apple-tree,
A robin sang in ecstasy?
Is this thy sorrow, this thy care,
Within the florist's window there?

Letters to a Literary Aspirant

(Being an Anatomy of Art contained in a few letters addressed to Mr. —, and now published by permission of the writer)

I

MY DEAR NEPHEW,—With a view to benefiting your race, perpetuating your memory, obtaining a ready passport to agreeable society, and—incidentally—increasing your income, you propose to write a book. And with a modesty and a candor that surprise as much as they delight me, you desire in the first place some knowledge of how to construct this edifice of fancy. I admit that you might apply to a more responsible authority, but scarcely to one who would suffer so little inconvenience in parting with his philosophy. Furthermore, I observe that you give your mentor an entirely free hand, and apparently are prepared to welcome with equal cordiality his directions for compiling a theological treatise, a volume of roundelays, or a book of cricketing statistics. That, no doubt, is the true spirit of learning, and by going to a sufficient variety of sources you should in time accumulate much interesting information. My own contribution to this fund will, however, deal only with those works of Imagination in Prose which are known

as Novels; and to the best of my ability I shall try to show you how these are done. I should like you to remember, by the way, that if, now and then, I instinctively make an ingratiating affectation of diffidence, this is not to be taken quite seriously.

In its relations to Life, the Novel is like the letters L-I-F-E which spell it: as much an affair of symbols, conventions, and associations, and composed on as arbitrary a plan as the shape and order of those letters. It is as though out of an endless coil of string inextricably tangled, one cut a little piece with two clear ends, arranged it in an orderly pattern, and drew a picture of that. This picture would neither be string nor endless tangle, and no more is the Novel Life.

Your question now is (or ought to be, if you are attentively following the argument): How am I to perform with Life the equivalent of this feat?

Well, my nephew, you first choose from the tangle of loving and lying and disinheriting and sinning and repenting and quarrelling and dying, and all the other things that go on in the world,

some bit that already suggests a pattern. This is the Original Idea, and the thinking of it is technically termed the Inspiration.

Next, you cut out this bit or idea from the rest of the tangle and arrange it nicely, so as to have two ends, with some neat little loops and flourishes between. That is to say—to come more literally to the business in hand—you furnish the idea with suitable details, and provide the necessary characters, cutting into their lives at the moment the story opens, leaving everything in their existence unrecorded while they are on your stage except the events you wish them to take part in, and finally dismissing them forever when these events have come to an orderly ending.

This is called the Plot, as it is, or should be, in your head, and it is evident that already a great departure has taken place from the real complexity and illogicality of life.

Lastly you draw a picture of this; that is to say, you put your plot into the most appropriate words your vocabulary supplies. With this process, which is termed Literary Labor, all trace of actuality disappears. Instead of creatures of three dimensions and various colors performing a million complicated motions in a world as intricate as themselves; instead even of the bright, fragmentary picture of them in your mind's eye, you have now merely some little symbols, all black and of two dimensions only, which simply set the reader's mind working, and make it, if they can, retrace the actual road and see the countries of which they are the map. If your hero goes into battle and you wish to convey the roaring of cannon, you write the word "bang" with a note of exclamation. If he kisses the heroine, you describe this electrifying sensation by saying "he was transported with rapture." In fact, you simply say to your reader: "Kindly conjure up so-and-so as vividly as possible. I shall supply you with a set of words to assist your imagination"; much as a doctor supplies a draught and the patient does the rest.

Your object, then, at every stage in your novel-making must be to discover

the water-worn channels in your reader's mind, so that by means of one of these your own stream of romance may flow more readily and make a goodlier torrent; otherwise your symbols might be Chinese characters instead of English for all the images they will awaken in his brain. It is precisely here that the cunning and experienced professional scores his points and makes his income; and the most useful, and I flatter myself unique, feature of these epistles will be the illustrations of how this is done, and the short cut you will learn thereby to the orchard of experience.

First, for a moment, let us consider this reader's mind, and let it be an average sample, the mind of "the man in the street," as the phrase is. It will be found to enter with pleasure to itself and profit to you into certain old situations and ancient problems, time after time, probably till life ceases on the earth. To give you an exhaustive list of these would scarcely be fair to less happily advised contemporaries, but here are one or two to try your new nib upon. Any obvious blend of the pathetic and heroic (*e. g.*, expiring soldier simultaneously saving colors and exclaiming "Mother!"); Impropriety seriously, and Religion melodramatically treated; Love, when crossed, indiscreet, or what an eminent man has called "kitchy-witchy"; and the whole field of Crime. Dozens more you will doubtless discover for yourself, but each item I have mentioned may be guaranteed to have a path ready made for it in the mind we are considering.

Your obvious road to success, then, is along one of these paths, and in choosing your particular right-of-way I should strongly advise you to follow one of two principles. Either take a well-trodden, advertised-by-all-tourist-agencies, popular road—as, for instance, a county family with a doubtful succession to the baronetcy and a mystic bracelet; or else make a daring affectation of originality. Let your hero be a red-haired amateur chimney-sweep, for example, and let him have an encounter with a rattlesnake in a flue; the scene being laid in some

South American republic nobody has yet written about. All Defoe and most of Smollett can thus be palmed off as "fresh," or even "striking."

Sometimes, it is true, the most astonishing results may be obtained by an appeal to seldom-touched sympathies and curiosities; or by simply holding up to Nature so bright a mirror that passers-by are arrested by the very clearness of the reflection; but to do these things successfully requires a habit of independent reflection and a self-confidence in employing material thus ground out of experience that I cannot take for granted in laying down general principles for a Man of Letters. Besides, if you are so much cleverer than your uncle as this would imply, what is the use of my instructing you?—Your affectionate and well-intentioned

UNCLE.

II

MY DEAR NEPHEW,—To come now to the kernel of the matter. You have decided, let us say, to make an appeal to that love of robust adventure and the more elementary virtues which so honorably distinguishes Englishmen. Suppose you select as your original idea the fascinating notion of a young man who shall come into his own, or somebody else's, patrimony after many hairbreadth adventures, winning on his way a beautiful wife, though owing to her excess of maidenly innocence he shall not at first perceive that she reciprocates his affection. (This, you will remember, is called the Inspiration.) Make the period some epoch in history when stirring events would naturally be imagined by your reader to occur; and, to convey an even livelier glamour of gallantry, let the scene be laid in France, as has been so fashionable of late. Finally, let your hero tell his adventures himself in a simple and confiding fashion.

In the following illustration of this method notes upon the mechanism have been placed in rectangular brackets.

It was in the springtime of 1546 [the last three figures being transposable],

upon a day thereafter printed indelibly upon my memory, that the Duc summoned me to his ante-chamber. As I passed down the long passage leading from the battlement to the armory, I saw through a crevice in the venerable stones one fleeting glimpse of white clouds, blue river, and green fields that uplifted my boyish heart like Bordeaux wine.

[Or, gray clouds, black river, and white fields that depressed, etc., like a Bordeaux pigeon. The whole tone is given in this meteorological sentence, while the simile is intentionally French in either case.]

"M. le Duc is strange this morning," said Pierre.

He stood on guard before my uncle's apartments, as he had guarded my grandfather's before him in the Wars of the Jacquerie and the League.

[Note how the relationships of all these persons and the precise period of history are neatly indicated in one brief sentence. There is no pausing over uninteresting preliminaries in romantic fiction.]

"How so?" I asked.

"He has not called for his chocolate," responded the grizzled henchman.

[This is subtle. "I have noticed a stream of blood flowing under the door," would be the obvious retort. It would indicate an amateur hand, however.]

I drew aside the curtain and entered, and then I paused in uncertainty how to proceed. Instead of the customary "Parbleu, Anatole, vous êtes toujours!" with which my uncle welcomed me on the rare occasions on which I was summoned to his presence, I heard nothing but the ticking of the Rhenish eight-day clock and the tap-tapping of ivy-leaves upon the window-pane.

[Observe the verisimilitude gained by reduplicating "tap."]

"Mon uncle le Duc, Je suis here! Where êtes vous?" I called out.

But there was no need to ask. With a dagger driven hard into his heart, the Duc Raoul Saint Cristophe de la Mangerie-Rôchvalléncienne lay stark upon the floor of his boudoir.

Even in death he looked what indeed he was—a great nobleman of France; and then and there I dipped my young fingers in his blood and vowed that if I, Anatole Jean de la Mangerie-Rôchvalléncienne, were given life and strength, his murderer would some day lie even as he lay.

[This terrible threat becomes even more terrible by its slight—and intentional—indirectness.]

"Close the doors! Down with the portcullis! Let not the assassin escape!" I screamed with all the strength of my youthful lungs.

I was answered by a light girlish laugh.

"Monsieur is very much in earnest," said a soft voice behind me.

I turned as though I had been struck, and there, in that chamber which the moment before had held only the dead and myself, stood a fair and slender figure crowned with an aureole of golden hair; and I found myself looking into a pair of eyes whose singular spell held me staring like a country booby while you could have counted twenty.

[This unaffected confession of weakness is characteristic of the modern romantic hero. See David Balfour and all his variations.]

"Mademoiselle——?" I stammered.

"Monsieur?" she smiled.

"I am unable," I began, with all the dignity I could muster, "to account for this——"

"Intrusion?" she inquired.

"Honor," I replied with a low bow, not unworthy, I thought to myself, of a de la Mangerie-Rôchvalléncienne.

[In fact, it is quite unnecessary to account for it at all; for in this branch of art the incidents need merely be picturesque in themselves and follow so closely at the heels of one another as to leave no time for criticism. I shall give an instance of this now.]

Her lips parted to answer me, a smile was beginning to gather in the dimples of her cheeks, when a strange thing happened. The color suddenly flew from her face, leaving it white as the pallid Duc upon the carpet, and into her lovely eyes rushed an expression of

terror that after all these years haunts me still.

Quickly following their frozen glance I turned my head, and there, seen for an instant through the oriel window, I beheld the face of—the Duc Raoul Saint Cristophe de la Mangerie-Rôchvalléncienne!

[By this neat trick attention is diverted from the mysterious entry of the lady—which might be difficult to explain without some constructive care; and if you waste time on this you may miss your market.]

We will now suppose that our readers have been hurried through seventeen or eighteen similar episodes; that the lady is still partly wrapped in obscurity, though her name is discovered to be Antoinette Enaspic de Cotolette, and herself the high-spirited representative of a rival and much-injured house; that the mystery of the two Ducs has merely thickened; that a wicked Archbishop and a designing Count have appeared on the scene; and finally that our hero has come to Paris for reasons which have been evaded by a similar device to that described above. Let us now assume we are at chapter 20, and let us do the Earl's-Court-Exhibition-old-Paris-street scene, so popular with devourers of these romances.]

The landlord conducted me up stairs interminable and along corridors damp as vaults, where the arras rustled stealthily as we passed and the bats flitted noiselessly through the radiance of our lantern, till at length he paused before a door high up in this labyrinth of a hostelrie and turned a ponderous key. I looked over his shoulder in time to catch a glimpse of two gigantic rats scampering across an uncarpeted floor.

"Monsieur will find company," he said with his mocking leer.

"The company will find monsieur," I retorted with as cheerful an air as I could muster.

The fellow grinned at the jest [a fair sixteenth-century sample], and withdrew. I was alone at last!

Rapidly I cast my eyes round the room to make sure that I was unobserved, and then drew from my wallet

the precious packet. The seal was still unbroken!

I smiled with renewed satisfaction and approached the window.

The stars were twinkling peacefully over Paris, as though they twinkled upon a Paradise instead of this huge cesspool of passion and hate. Far down below I looked upon a dark pavement and gleaming gutters, where the passing watchman, with his cry of "Vive la France encore, mon ami!" and the muttered countersign, "Mon mère, ma père!" alone broke the deathly silence.

Right opposite I saw a jumble of peaked gables, latticed windows, and timbered fronts, and about half-way down the perpendicular wall of darkness confronting me I could just perceive a glimmer of light escaping from a narrow loophole.

It was my only chance.

Carefully measuring the distance with my eye and finding that it was only 52 kilometres 8 ells [this has a fine Franco-archaic sound; what it is in miles I cannot tell you, but no one will stop to inquire at this exciting juncture], I commended my soul to Saint Julienne de Potage and leapt into the dizzy void.

Unfortunately, I had miscalculated the distance. Instead of 52 kilometres it should have been 152! Round and round I spun in the cold midnight air till I had lost all count of my revolutions. I told my beads more hurriedly than I care to confess, and then stretched out my hand at a venture. What exactly happened I can scarcely describe; I only know that I caught a glimpse of the lighted loophole, grasped the projecting iron bar as I shot past, and with an almost superhuman effort seated myself astride the sill.

[After this feat our hero may with advantage witness a murder through the aforesaid loophole, fight a single combat with the murderer, bury the victim with a spade and a dark lantern, and in the act of doing this make the acquaintance of some popular historical character, such as Richelieu, Talleyrand, Henry the Fourth, or a Bourbon. He then rescues the heroine from a

coffin where she has been laid while drugged, confounds the machinations of the wicked Archbishop, and all ends happily somewhat as follows.]

"I leave the decision in the fair hands of Mademoiselle Antoinette," said his Majesty with a courteous inclination.

I looked toward her, and my heart stood still. My fate was sealed indeed; her coolness for the last two days could have but one explanation. She had resolved to have my life.

I removed my breastplate and cried: "Strike, mademoiselle! A Mangerie-Rôchvalléncienne knows how to die!"

To my astonishment her beautiful eyes filled with tears.

"Anatole!" she exclaimed, stretching out her arms, "quelle rôti aujourd'hui!"

"Mademoiselle has decided," smiled the King. "Kneel down, monsieur; I have a *souçon* else for you."

A moment later I rose with a cardinal's hat upon my head and the Countess Antoinette upon my arm.

You see now how it is done. Nothing can be simpler, and few things more likely to be substantially appreciated.—Your affectionate and well-intentioned

UNCLE.

III

MY DEAR NEPHEW,—The illustration I am now going to give you is an example of what may be styled the North British Melodramatic Idyl, one of the most popular brands at present in the market. The principal points to attend to in the construction of these remunerative epics are as follows.

In the first place, you must understand that the North Britons possessed at one time a language of their own as distinctively national as their marmalade, and fragments of this, together with certain phrases from the Venerable Bede, the Bible, and Mr. R. L. Stevenson (such as whithersoever, whereby, and peradventure) have been skilfully blended to form what is technically known in the hardy North as "a' oo' blethers." A few moments

must certainly be employed in mastering this.

Secondly, it is highly advisable that the tale be put into the mouth of one of your fictitious characters, lest your friends should really suppose that this patois is the habitual outlet for your feelings.

Then a certain strain of sentiment must be caught. It is hard to exactly define this, but perhaps I can most nearly describe it by asking you to conceive the simplicity of an Oxford freshman united to the uncontrollable emotions of a Salvation Army captain, and illuminated by flashes of intelligence at about the intervals at which they occur in a senile alcoholic patient. Place a hero thus equipped in a quagmire of hazardous adventures, give him the Devil's own luck in getting out of them, and you can easily see that four-and-sixpence will not be too great a price to put upon his experiences.

And now, with these principles in mind, let us begin.

God wots I am but a feckless loon, and the ongoings I herewith give to the world only the clavers of a dreich and waesome peat-hag; yet it behooveth all men to speak of what they have seen, particularly should the profession of the ministry have given them (as by the grace of Providence it has given me) the gift of what they call in our parts the gab; and so will I e'en take up the tale upon a frosty morning in the latter part of November towards the close of the Fatal Year. Fatal indeed it had been for the old house of Auchterfecchan. Two braw sons snip-pit awa' by the tattie-bogles, the kye blithered but and ben, and the winsome bit lass Miss Buttercup wrestling now with the dread curse of the Drum-warrochs. For the malison had erstwhile withered her rosy cheeks, and the doctor's nag stood even at that instant before the sneck kailyard.

Wae's me that I should have come into the parish on that day! The birken shaws that late had coyly smiled upon the keeking kisses of douce September, hung now so snell and drear

that my heart almost failed me as I lingered in the Wabster's Wynd. The very curlydoddies seemed to have won some inkling whereby they might read the portents of the morrow.

[And so on for as many pages as the glossary employed continues to supply you with epithets. Throw them in like a snowstorm while it lasts, even should you have to lapse into English by the middle of the volume. The comparative clarity of your latter chapters will be forgiven by the unsuspecting Sassenach, and possibly even by the surfeited Caledonian.]

This introductory outburst may be termed the brose or first course of your Scottish refection, and the experienced reader will soon begin to look out for the love-passage which inevitably occurs in the course of chapters 2, 3, 4, or 5. It must of course be a girl-and-boy affair, a case of simple-hearted, impulsive, pre-adolescent affection; what, in fact, is popularly termed "pretty," and known more technically to North Britons as "havers." Thus:—]

"Buttercup," said I, "now that I am become a man, 't is time my beard 'gan sprout."

["'gan sprout" = began to sprout; a melodramatically idyllic manner of expressing it, calculated to produce a kind of poetic effect.]

"Man?" quoth she, laughing, and shaking her elf-locks at me with very merriment. "Thou a man!"

["Thou" used for same purpose.]

"And why not man?" I answered stoutly, though I felt my face reddening 'neath her laughing gaze. "I am going to Glasgow College come Martin-mas a se'nnight."

"That will not make a boy into a man," she said more sedately.

"'T will make a sonsy lass into a flint-hearted woman," I retorted, with a strangled uprush of tears that eftsoon bechoked my utterance.

With mischancy divination I saw her in my mind's eye as I was after to see her in the flesh, enclasped by the black arms of Bloodyaxe 'neath the pitying twinkle of the stars.

"Ye neep-heided gomerl!" she

scoffed. "A man like you to greet! Think shame to yourself!"

Yet her look was kinder than her keen-edged wit, and suddenly, ere I had time to catch my breath, she had kissed me roundly on the neb.

"Tammass, lad," she cried, "am I no' nicer than haggis after a'?"

"Whiles," I replied, pressing her snowy bosom 'gainst my homespun jerkin.

[This delicate morsel of poetry having been digested, and found not to lie too heavy on the "stammick," we shall now suppose our readers carried breathlessly through the assassination of Grey Jock by his hereditary rival Muckle-dowp of Middenbraes, through the moonlight landing of the Clan Collop on the shores of Cookypen, and through the fifteen or sixteen murders, hame-suckens, robberies, and abductions to which this untoward event gives rise. Our hero, who has hitherto borne a blameless character in the ministry, becomes involved in an attempt to fire the Kirk by the horrid yet ingenious device of steeping the elders in paraffin and grouping them round the stove. This occurs through no fault of his own, but merely as a natural consequence of the disposition and acquirements indicated at the beginning of this letter. However, just as one thing leads to another in kindred fields of life (such as the nursery and the asylum), so the joys of arson lead our archaic *raconteur* to consecrate himself to a life of gore. A magnificent opportunity for Turkish-bathing in undiluted pathos is afforded by his farewell to the survivors of his congregation and the cinders of his elders. Thus:—]

For the last time I ascended the steps of the pulpit, whence Sabbath after Sabbath, through hirpling May and wowf November, I had striven as well as a man might to daunt the faithful and controvert the heresies of the schismatics. For we were sore troubled with the Free Kirk in Auchterfecchan. The effects of my thoughtless violence

were still to be seen in the roofless vestry and charred precentor, but of these manifestations I took but little heed at that moment. An I had possessed a belly stiff enough to face the moved countenances of my flock [note the forcible vulgarity of this phrase; it is one of the hall-marks of the N.B. epic], then peradventure I should have spied salt tears in eyes that never grat before, but my heart was too full to jalousie them.

"My poor friends and brethren," I began,—and you could have heard a bawbee drop for very silence when I oped my lips,—"you are going to be bereft of me! Would that I might continue to sustain, fructify, and inspire you, but, my friends, it is not to be. A higher calling awaits me, a louder voice booms in my lug. I have tasted the joys of brandishing claymores on the moorlands, of enthusiastically loving hoydenish maids, of burying mine enemies by the half hundred, of swimming the waterfall and leaping the precipitous ravine, and nothing more is needed to convince me that herein lies my duty. Yet I shall aye think of you kindly, and hope to meet the best among you hereafter."

At these words my voice failed me, my mind clouded, and all I can now remember is being carried by Andra Sneckett and Cristie Mackay towards the Kye Trough in Thrums Lane.

At this point I shall leave you to finish the epic as you think best. The only two essential points are these: You must not leave too many characters surviving at the fall of the curtain, or you will have a blood-fed public demanding back their four-and-sixpences; and you must appropriately reward your hero for his exertions by legally uniting him to that exuberant product of amorous innocence, Miss Buttercup of Auchterfecchan.—Your affectionate and well-intentioned

UNCLE.



College Professors Who Are Men of Letters

Harvard

By FRANK W. NOXON

ONE hunting for big game dismounted from an electric car in Cambridge not long since, armed with a kodak and a magazine of blank paper; and meeting a very old gentleman in the college yard inquired of him, "Where shall I find the Harvard men of letters?"

The old gentleman looked up in surprise, shook his head sorrowfully, and fared on with the reply, "There are n't any!"

He had survived Lowell and Longfellow and Holmes, the former two poets who had interpreted literature and life to Harvard youth, the latter a poet who had sung to the college its own spirit in a series of official occasions only interrupted when he died less than ten years ago; and no radiant presence had since appeared to illumine the emptiness. Pilgrims still visited the Longfellow home and the Lowell home, but the tourist's very fidelity to those solemn monuments served only to remind the unhappy old gentleman that there was no living poet to whom pilgrimages might be made.

After he had walked a little he turned and remarked, "Of course you will celebrate the minor?" and kindly but incredulously acknowledging the disclaimer which his gibe evoked he ambled along and did not turn again.

The hunter, anxious but not discouraged, confided in a man of the class of Eighty-six. "Too much science!" said he; and told a story about a philologist who gave at Radcliffe a course in the study of a certain eminent poet some centuries dead. Whenever he came to one of the words which he could derive he would trace its pedigree. The young women at first had a tendency to stop idly at a hard passage in the text and ask, "What does that mean, sir?" But the philologist sternly rebuked them and replied, "Mean! It means what it says!" One

day when the preceptor asked one of the young women what a passage meant she answered, "It means what it says!" and the preceptor picked up his books, clapped them under his arm, and priggled out of the room without a word. "Can you expect literature," demanded the man of the class of Eighty-six, "to sprout in ashes like that?"

The question whether great men just happen or are the fruit of their time cannot be localized upon Harvard. If it is admitted, for instance, that Longfellow was actually important, either as a poet or as an enriching influence on undergraduate life, it was Bowdoin soil that produced him, not Harvard, and if Harvard has in our day no name of note in belles-lettres to succeed Lowell, this is quite as fairly due to despair of finding, in Cambridge or anywhere else, an American dimensioned for the place as to a loss of appetite at Harvard for appreciative lecturing on English literature.

Some considerable critics, pre-eminently Mr. Charles Eliot Norton, vehemently assert that the poverty is of the times. In a recent address Mr. Norton spoke of the national trend away from the finer things toward materialism, jingoism, rough-riderism. He was very severe upon Mr. Roosevelt, whom he termed "the great disappointment of our time." To Mr. Norton and those who agree with him in this view, it is not surprising that "nobody in America is writing anything that will last," because, they are convinced, nobody, not even somebody heir by evolution to a lyric voice, could utter eminent joy in such an atmosphere of money-making, strife for creature comforts, and conquest of sea islands. These trembling mourners thus find themselves believing that America at present has a national spirit too sordid to produce any important

men of letters, and that Harvard exhibits conditions less favorable even than the general, because in her lecture-rooms the study of words and sentences has driven out the study of thoughts and the æsthetic enrichment of life.

The active lecturers at Harvard have either chosen to teach rather than to write, or else needing a fixed income have not been able to allow themselves the luxury. The list of literary performances of each is so brief that little short of a Gray's "Elegy" could be expected to win place for one of them. They teach even better than they write. And forsooth the Lowell and Longfellow brilliancy is deceptive, for both of them wrote very much better than they taught. Longfellow chafed like a man in irons during nearly the whole of his professorship, toiling faithfully, but tired, very tired, and not imparting his best; while Lowell, though less sensitive to restraint and more buoyant and elastic, was so unfitted temperamentally for the calm, careful preparation of what was most lasting in him that he gave his classes by very reason of his inexhaustible fertility the whole crop of what came up in his head—roses, wheat, weeds, and all. That the teaching is more expert than in the halcyon days is at least a questionable occasion for lamentation.

Anywise, there are elements in the situation at Harvard which are offered confidently as balm to the despairing. In spite of the "means-what-it-says" preceptor and the "science" asphyxiation which is asserted to threaten all youth who sit at Cambridge, there are many lecturers in all departments who charge their fields with a strong current of joy in life, love of fine things, and an irradiating benignity. There is in a faculty the sense of limited province. When Lowell had been engaged by the overseers for the express purpose of interpreting literature, there may well have been a feeling among the philosophers and philologists that between him and the preachers in Appleton Chapel the call to grace would be adequately spoken, and they might appropriately stick, the philosophers to

their logic and the philologists to their roots. With the removal of the central fount of grace the bubbling springs have broken forth in a dozen different places. A fine spray is in the air. An undergraduate has to be made of gossamer to escape becoming at least occasionally moist.

Mr. Norton himself, though he now gives but one course, and that voluntarily, to a few advanced students in fine arts at his house, still exerts a very great influence on the taste of the community. In the Cambridge public schools the children read his "Heart of Oak" selections. In the college his views are so well analyzed by this time that within the limits of his established satrapy of æsthetics many minds probably render unconscious tribute by thinking out decisions in terms of Mr. Norton. The public address from which a quotation was made a moment ago revealed him in the light of an occasional public speaker on platforms not far from home. In that address his appeal was for the teaching of literature in the public schools in order incidentally to inculcate taste, manners, and, he thought, morals. His own personality must have infected many of those present with a wistful desire to have taste. Graceful, minutely considerate, quite without personal affectation, he was clad in the most beautifully fitting suit I ever saw. There was essential exquisiteness in his cuffs. They had a sort of translucence. Nor was his utterance, and the politeness even during the elegant execution of carnage upon Mr. Roosevelt, less perfectly the accomplished gentleman.

The real literary work of Mr. Norton's life is probably less understood than these external appearances. The author of very little original writing, his influence on the literary men of his time is held to have been very great, albeit very subtle. Pilgrims go to Cambridge, climb Shady Hill, and sit for a little at the feet of Mr. Norton. John Ruskin made him his literary executor; similar offices were performed by him for some of the legacies of Thomas Carlyle; and it is the joint confession of a grateful group of less

distinguished aspirants that Mr. Norton has murdered more incipient blunders of plan or of detail than they care to specify.

A Boston wit said to me once, "Mr. Norton is so fastidious that sometimes he can't even tolerate himself." Fastidious he certainly is, but he is exceedingly honest. While despising Mr. Roosevelt, he accepts as a great genius Mr. Kipling, the bard of the strenuous; and of course Mr. Kipling has to be accepted over the dead bodies of such of his banalities as Mr. Norton must slay before the ceremony of acceptance may proceed. He has never let his fastidiousness prevent his acknowledging power and originality wherever he found it.

Mr. Norton's criticisms of national policies have puzzled many persons who have difficulty in even admitting him a patriot. But he loves his country; he is glad to be dubbed traitor if so he may serve her; and for Charles Eliot Norton to prefer, as he does, residence in America when Spain holds his castles, Greece his temples, Italy his statues and paintings, and England his memories, is a sacrifice bearing full testimony to his affection for native land.

A more direct personal influence is that of a comparatively young instructor in English, Mr. Charles Townsend Copeland, who is said to know every man in college. A bachelor, he lodges upon the quadrangle in a cosy apartment where, after ten on many nights and after ten on Fridays stately, visit youth; and the reading is so choice, the talk so straight, and the silence so rich that men dare not go too often lest the whole thing shall topple and none may come. They are men much of the hour: the reading and the talk shall be of Kipling and Stevenson and what stirs the blood.

He is Lecturer on English Literature—one of two men beside Lowell who have held the title at Harvard. His popular tours into books, pausing exultantly at the highest peaks, glow bright with the red blood of men and women. He is instructor in composition, and those youth bring him "themes,"

which he sometimes reads aloud at lecture with quip and wile and profitable banter.

He writes, himself. And one day there was a knock.

"Who's there?" came a voice from the inner.

"Brown," said the boy, opening the door. "I just dropped in to say how d'y' do."

"Well," twinkled Mr. Copeland without showing himself, "have you said it?"

"Yes," said the boy.

"Good-bye," said Mr. Copeland; and the boy went away, set up: for he had been privileged to participate in a non-interference with the business of Harvard College.

His voluntary course of lectures and readings is open only to students, but sometimes more are turned away than find seats. After listening intently to some great familiar piece, the closely-packed audience will joyfully applaud, all tarrying for one of the little sermons which have made Mr. Copeland a much-sought guide to literature.

Mr. Copeland has taken of late to readings of the Bible for pure joy of its literary glories; and there is rather an expectation that the Scriptures may take on something like their proportionate place in the literary courses.

Mr. Copeland writes, but as with the others in that tense community he is so busy with his college work that he must have a rigid schedule which the young men may not upset, and even by this system he can make time for only occasional writing. The *Atlantic Monthly* has brought out some of his essays, and it was there that his "Carlyle as a Letter-Writer" was first published—that curiously fascinating study, since brought out as a book, in which the young critic of Stoughton Hall seems engaged in a fairly even-handed struggle with the old thunderer of Chelsea to see who can make the most telling phrases. Mr. Copeland makes phrases, as marvellous, some think, when he is talking and has got to go on as when he is writing and may dawdle. But dawdle he does, he says;

and a shrewd reader of his writing who had specially enjoyed the tense lunging speed was dumfounded at being told it was all done under very low pressure.

A year ago, in the Beacon Biographies, Mr. Copeland gave us his "Edwin Booth," the life in which appear the previously unpublished letters written to Mr. T. B. Aldrich. Booth "was a great actor, a good Christian, a brave and much-tried man," is the author's conclusion; and so completely does he avoid the fever which touches most of us when we think or write about player-folks, that one is fascinated with the man Booth and his unstage self. A welcome this book wrung even from reviewers, who rarely feel a sensation; and like Mr. Burton, Mr. Hapgood, Mr. Wister, and other youngish writers whom Mr. Mark Howe has enlisted for the Beacon series, the biographer of Booth has spoken a fresh, strong, just word, which is likely to stand as the last word.

The man who has for years been called the most popular among the undergraduates is the dean of the Lawrence Scientific School, Mr. Nathaniel Southgate Shaler. One of his courses in geology has to be given some years in Sanders Theatre; it is elected by so many men who go to enjoy the imaginativeness, the many-sidedness, the gushing draft on life, with which the lecturer's none-the-less serious and concentrated account of the subject is enriched.

For Mr. Shaler in his wilderness of dynamos, mortars, and chisels stands like a patriarchal prophet preaching that the Lord hath made everything beautiful in his time, and exhorting his engineers to be bound in the bundle of life, bachelors if not masters of arts. This is one of his arguments for the maintenance of patent laws. By hope of great reward, he declares, many minds are turned to invention, in the pursuit of which so many collateral subjects are invaded that even the unfilled mind acquires continual increase of varied taste in the multiform joys of existence.

By what tributary of pure science

the dean has ascended, whether by the sub-strata of Kentucky, or the beckoning groves of landscape gardening, or the bristling parks of naval armament, I know not; but in one supreme manifestation of the versatility to which he urges his students, he has reached the head-waters of poesy, and stands author of an Elizabethan play in blank verse. Five years ago he privately printed "Armada Days," an actable work in which he gives light, heat, and power to the militant Queen Bess and makes the daggered messengers of Spain-goaded Rome balk at the deadly deed beneath her calm courageous eye.

In actual inches Mr. Shaler is not excessively tall, but whether it is his Lord Tennyson felt hat, or a trembling suspicion on the part of those he meets that he is as mighty and ancient as Hector or Ulysses, he assumes a great altitude. Somebody once drew a picture of him standing unmoved in the whirlwind, smiling at the lightnings.

Who can wonder in what spirit Mr. Kuno Francke, another of this interesting group, lectures on German literatures? Scarcely one of his essays quite fails to suggest somewhere what Mr. Gates has called "the sparkling delight in life," and as he somewhat facetiously makes his way this is always tempered with a "striving for completeness of person," as he has himself expressed it. He is witty as the *Fliegende Blaetter* is witty. In one of his letters from Germany he commented upon a meeting of eminent scientists gathered at Berlin out of respect to Leibnitz. The event was woefully neglected. The press notices were brief before and afterward, the public did not attend, even the government was represented only by one gentleman from the department of instruction and he was late!

Mr. Francke is blessed with the faculty for recognizing greatness even if it is going on just before him, with no tradition to guide. When he saw Hauptmann's "Die Versunkene Glocke" performed in Berlin he enthusiastically justified himself for having indulged some hopes of a revival in German æsthetics, and wrote: "Here we are

indeed reminded of the artistic temper which created the type of Faust."

His work so far, while uniformly careful and mature, has been largely of a temporary sort. Like his associates, he seems to give his semesters to work. The annual trip to Germany bears fruit, summer and harvest, in entertaining articles for American periodicals, now the review of a play, now a study of character, now a comment on some current event in the Fatherland, full of information happily interspersed with temperament, but chiefly with the journalistic incentive. The naïveté of some of his turns, however, gives a flavor which almost carries him over into the region of the permanent.

In philosophy, again, Harvard's contribution to what Mr. Gates calls "increase of *vital* knowledge" is almost if not quite unique. She has two teachers of philosophy who lead their disciples with the charm of a vocabulary rich in terms of the every-day, by which no hard thoughts are engendered. Pure literature, I suppose, may be limited to such writing as intelligent persons not scholars can read for pleasure. Well within this definition come many of the philosophical dissertations of Mr. William James and Mr. George Herbert Palmer. Their philosophy is almost done down to the terms in which we speak of one as "taking life philosophically." It is life which they take, and their science consists of the logical reasons, set out in order, why man may be serene and hopeful without stultifying his intellectual convictions.

There are probably few relations in which Mr. James is not like one of the boys. In the course of an argument he is not above calling a certain sort of person a "duffer," or a convincing statement a "regular clincher." He wears a hunting-jacket if he likes, and has fun pretty much all the time. Moreover, he began life as a physician and taught physiology in the Harvard Medical School before he ever taught philosophy, while still back of that he was a student in the Lawrence Scientific School. To be sure his father was a Swedenborgian divine, but modern sophistication gives ministers' sons a

reputation for re-acting. Mr. James stands as a pure man of science. The men approach his lecture-room as they would the laboratory of an original investigator in chemistry, undisturbed by any doubt of getting the full benefit of the experiment even if the result is an assault on the text-book.

Going to Divinity Avenue for your orthodoxy and taking it right on the quadrangle from a man who is not a D.D. and does n't even look solemn, are two distinctly different quests. Mr. James has a twinkle in his eye even when he is confuting Mr. Herbert Spencer. "It is no less 'passional,'" says he, "to reject a hypothesis through fear of error than to accept it through hope of truth." To his pupils he genially adds: "It is intellectually respectable for you to act on either of these 'passional' impulses"; and the subsequent orthodox contentment among the undergraduates is appalling. Europe has had wind of it, and Mr. James is Gifford lecturer on natural religion at Edinburgh University.

Of Mr. James and his distinguished brother, Mr. Henry James, it has been said that one is a psychologist who writes like a novelist, and the other a novelist who writes like a psychologist. William interweaves so thoroughly his systematic philosophy with the common facts of life that he throws his influence, I suspect, for a sort of ideal modern male, very much of this world, well-bred but not by rote, and having a spirit fertile unto eager and varied luxuriance.

Mr. Palmer, if less gay than Mr. James, has, I think, a quality which even more completely challenges those who deny to the university a pervading appreciation of fine things. Perhaps the influence which his speaking and writing exert upon the mind is most nearly like that of Mr. Drummond's widely-circulated sermon, "The Greatest Thing in the World." Nothing Mr. Palmer has written fails to have a form—a teasing of the imagination and a deftly sustained suspense; a gently terrifying appearance of gloom which leads, none may say for the moment which way, to the light: a form which

Mr. Drummond's cluster of beautiful thoughts cannot boast. But in Mr. Palmer there is the same strong insidious compulsion to a sweet, gentle, all-loving mood. Mr. Palmer's disquisitions, never impractical or over-sentimental, somehow represent life as a garden where the beautiful, the fragrant, and the sweet are to be had for the plucking.

Clothed in this subtle appeal for elevated use of leisure, the straight clear force of such an idea as "The Glory of the Imperfect" — the privilege of watching growths — glides into the convictions with the ease of an unopposed conquest. You would infinitely rather be on his side for the mere sake of being there. Summing up the controversy over his conversion to the elective system some years ago, he congratulated his "stout opponents" on their unflinching courtesy, and remarking that "we rightly expect the scholar's life to civilize him who pursues it" declared it "a pleasure to linger longer in their kindly contentious company."

Mr. Palmer might have been too gentle for a Unitarian minister, because even a Unitarian congregation likes to feel that if there had been a Hell their preacher would have told them about it; but the freely swinging doors of the

Palmer home respond to the frequent and eager knock of the student community, which purrs contentedly as it basks in the bright sunshine of the moral philosopher, a presence saddened now by the grievous untimely death of his great and good lady, the accomplished former president of Wellesley.

It should not be surprising that out of this department of philosophy should issue the voice of the singer.

Born in Spain, of parents both full Spanish, Harvard's sole lyric poet is Mr. George Santayana, 17 years out of college and an assistant professor. Like the whole list of his ever-busy colleagues, he has taught more than he has written.

"The Sense of Beauty" and "Interpretations of Poetry and Religion," in prose, and one small volume of verse entitled "Sonnets and Other Poems," are the sum of

his published works. His personality is extremely individual: with an artistic conscience almost as tyrannical as that to which any Frenchman ever joyfully and piously submitted, or at least a temperamental incapacity for scribbling stuff he does n't feel for the mere sake of scribbling something, he dreams in a sort of discontented yearning which is interrupted, when at all, by some strong outburst of enjoyment or of disdain.

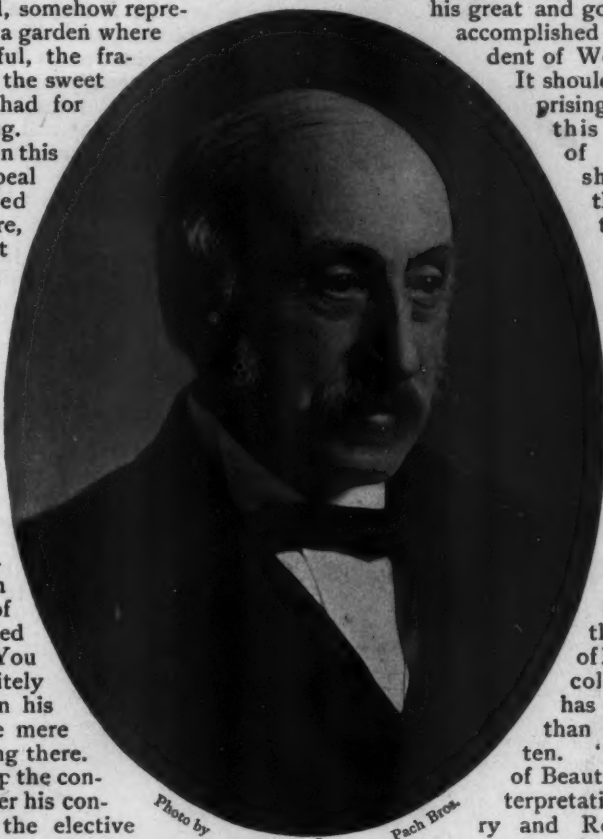


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PROFESSOR CHARLES ELIOT NORTON



Photo by

PROFESSOR NATHANIEL S. SHALER

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O for a chamber in an eastern tower,
 Spacious and empty, roofed in odoriferous cedar,
 A silken soft divan, a woven carpet,
 Rich and many-coloured;

And there at even I might stand and listen
 To thrum of distant lutes and dying voices
 Chanting the ditty an Arabian captive
 Sang to Darius.

Or in his ode to Columbus:

He gave the world another world, and ruin
 Brought upon blameless, river-loving nations,
 Cursed Spain with barren gold and made the Andes
 Fiefs of St. Peter.

The earth, the mother once of god-like Theseus
 And mighty Heracles, at length is weary
 And now brings forth a spawn of ant-like creatures,
 Blackening her valleys,

Inglorious in their birth and in their living,
 Curious and querulous, afraid of battle,
 Rummaging earth for coals, in camps of hovels
 Crouching from winter,

As if grim fate, amid our boastful prating,
 Made us the image of our brutish fathers,
 When from their caves they issued, crazed
 with terror,
 Howling and hungry.

Mr. Santayana's most ambitious work of the creative imagination is his dialogue, "Lucifer," an odd fancy in which Hermes is the chance guest of the evil one shivering on his frozen island

High on the utmost headland of the world.

The poet's future would seem to lie germinant in the personal experiences he is yet to undergo. His imagination rarely feeds on life or interprets it with pleasurable or startling reality. But it seems impossible that the author of those stanzas quoted from the "Columbus," gnarled as Whitman, and yet possessing the dignity and charm of lyric form, should fail to establish a relation with his time and sing clarion to the rising sun.



MR. CHARLES TOWNSEND COPELAND

There is about the atmosphere of Mr. Santayana's lecture-room a *rarity* in which some of the men at first find it difficult to breathe: a perception of another and still yonder Thule of honesty which is still to be attained.

One more member of the psychology group whose title to a place among the

peoples were rather stupidly at fault for the common misunderstandings, and has plunged into a course of plain speech. If some placid Americans have been ruffled by his strictures, they must adjudge him free of spleen when they learn that into Germany, in the German language, he has cast com-

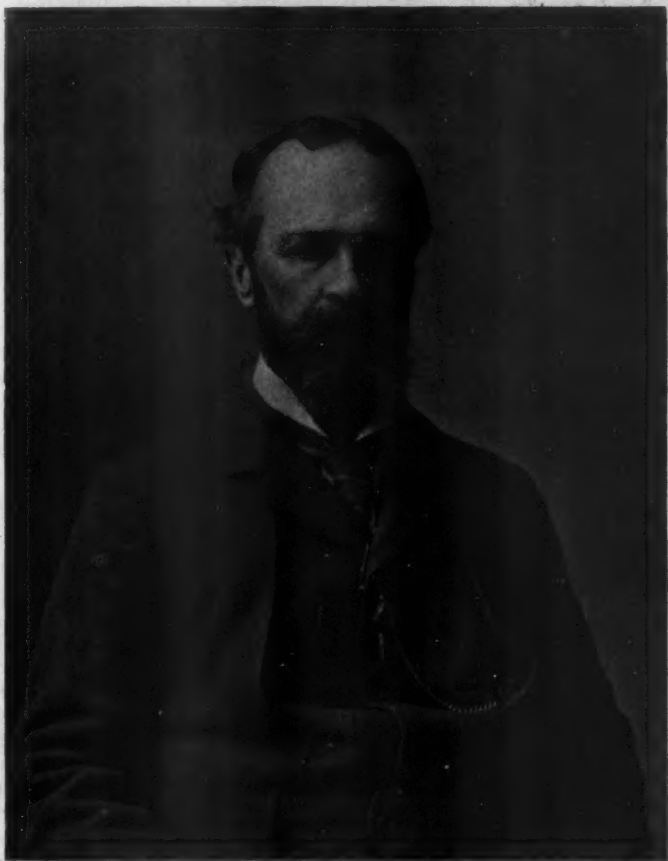


Photo by

PROFESSOR WILLIAM JAMES

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Harvard men of letters will scarcely be disputed is Hugo Münsterberg. It was in a way he who presented to the university in a conventional way the German guest, Prince Henry. It is he who has interpreted America and Germany to each other in the medium of the magazine essay. An individual of strenuous vigor, he has felt that both

parisons equally severe in their disparagement of such German traits as seem to him in need of attention.

It may suffice by way of illustrating the breadth and depth of Mr. Münsterberg's American notes to say that he has failed to find American university professors, as he found German university docents, "the best human material



PROFESSOR BARRETT WENDELL

which the country has." His remedy would be a salary of at least \$25,000.

The promise of entertainment made in the title "American Traits," which is borne by his recent collection of essays, is redeemed generously. He has matter of vital moment to convey, and conveys it with the most charming humor and sparkle.

Mr. Lewis Edwards Gates possesses in a degree which comes near to genius the faculty of appreciation. Francis Jeffrey, he says, "*rarely appreciates* a piece of literature, interprets it imaginatively, lends himself to its peculiar charm, and expresses this charm through sympathetic symbolism. . . . He is always on the watch; he never lends himself confidingly to his author and takes passively and gratefully the

mood and images his author suggests. He never loiters or dreams. He is full of business and bustle."

Not only is this, spelled backward, a just impression of some of Mr. Gates's own most delightful excursions into the pages of other writers, but it curiously suggests a peculiarity of his method in the college lecture. "Full of business and bustle," he says of Jeffrey. Mr. Gates in English literature is like an express train—jolt, jar, whizz, and hold fast. The train, however, does stop at large cities. If Mr. Gates has been provided with a good deal more work than can be carefully covered in the time, he selects a few points of signal consequence and "loiters and dreams" if only for a moment. While he does what he says Jeffrey did, he also does many of the beautiful things which he says Jeffrey did not do.

In his appreciation Mr. Gates is drawn to the theme which has been found to absorb so many of his associates—"the increase of *vital* knowledge." One of his "Three Studies" is of Matthew Arnold, whom he understands, in the *vital* sense, with an exceedingly searching comprehension. The point of view is dispassionate and critical rather than sympathetic,—a characteristic which many persons feel in much of Mr. Gates's work,—but he hits off graphically the ideal cultivated being whom Matthew Arnold thought it his mission to introduce and spread in England. "Over-intellectualism," says Mr. Gates, "like the over-development of any other power, leads to disproportion and disorder."

Mr. Gates is said to live a good deal alone—more with his books than with his fellows. His essays rather tend to substantiate this. He enjoys looking backward at men whose work is fin-

ished, and turns less to immediate contemporary life for his comparisons and allusions.

Among the productions of all these men appear but two works purely of the creative imagination—the "Armada Days" of Mr. Shaler and the poems of Mr. Santayana. An activity in that direction livelier, therefore,

dell as "eccentric." Upon acquaintance this impression dissolves and he appears uncommonly normal in little things as in large. He answers all his mail the same day. He strains to deliver his manuscript on date, even if, as in the preparation of "A Literary History of America," he finds himself harassed with personal distresses and



Photo by

PROFESSOR LEWIS E. GATES

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than of the others combined has been that of Mr. Barrett Wendell, who is the author of a romantic play and two novels. "The Duchess Emilia" and "Rankell's Remains" were published in the eighties and "Raleigh in Guiana" acted by the author and other members of the Tavern Club at Sanders Theatre some years ago.

A quantity of more or less amiable anecdotes have represented Mr. Wen-

mailed with writer's wrist. It seems impossible that even a hasty reading of the "History" should have failed to reveal the author's ingenuous and confiding use of the well-tested rules for putting a book together; carefully classifying all the material and summing up the parts as he progresses. This same spirit of deliberate appeal to the average, normal mind is present in lecture, chat, and letter. He never



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PROFESSOR HUGO MÜNSTERBERG

tries to be peculiar and above all never tries to be funny. When he is amusing, as in the description of a national nominating convention in "Rankell's Remains," he might be some grave innocent, solemnly pop-eyed with astonishment, as if he had n't the least idea anything in his narrative was comic. He has been accused of preferring England to America, but he says he does n't. One of his oft-repeated views is that in originality, spontaneity, and versatility the stolid England of our day has gone a long way farther from the England of Elizabeth than America has gone.

If there is eccentricity in throwing light on the "wrong" side of questions which cannot be re-opened without disturbing the comfortable slumber of provincials, sectionalists and rabid patriots, Mr. Wendell is in company with Mr. Owen Wister, author of a "Grant" that minces no words in describing the Grant administrations, and the late R. N. Toppan, author of an "Edward Randolph" which worries very little

about what men have thought so far. Of late, however, experience having taught him that the expression of his views brings down irritating contention, Mr. Wendell has sought to avoid controversy. His belief, expressed in a university periodical, that Radcliffe might be effeminizing Harvard, he did not further defend, and the hoarse shouts of "Stop, snob!" from the provincials who could not hail with gratitude his substitution, in the "History," of the bird's-eye view for the view from behind a hedge, have not nagged him into a reply.

On the day the Queen died Mr. Wendell happened to be delivering the summary lecture of a course in Elizabethan literature. Concluding with a comparison between the queen of that time and of ours, both-sided after his fashion, he spoke warmly of Victoria's simplicity, purity, and gentleness. Usually at the end of a course the men disperse with applause. Mr. Wendell suggested that they "part gravely and silently; as the greatest human spirit in the world is passing away: Victoria, *by the grace of God* Queen of England!" The mind turned to Oom Paul, Leo XIII., Henrik Ibsen, Leo Tolstoy.



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PROFESSOR GEORGE HERBERT PALMER

Victoria the greatest? Yet the simple dignity of the unashamed emotion, the almost passionate stress on the words "by the grace of God," the indefinable human grace of the benediction and its final deferential bow as he sat down,

promise of more. Mr. George Lyman Kittredge's delvings in "Words and their Ways" lean toward the popular essay, as does Mr. G. H. Maynadier's study in Chaucer,—while Mr. Henry M. Rideout, who edited Gray's "Let-

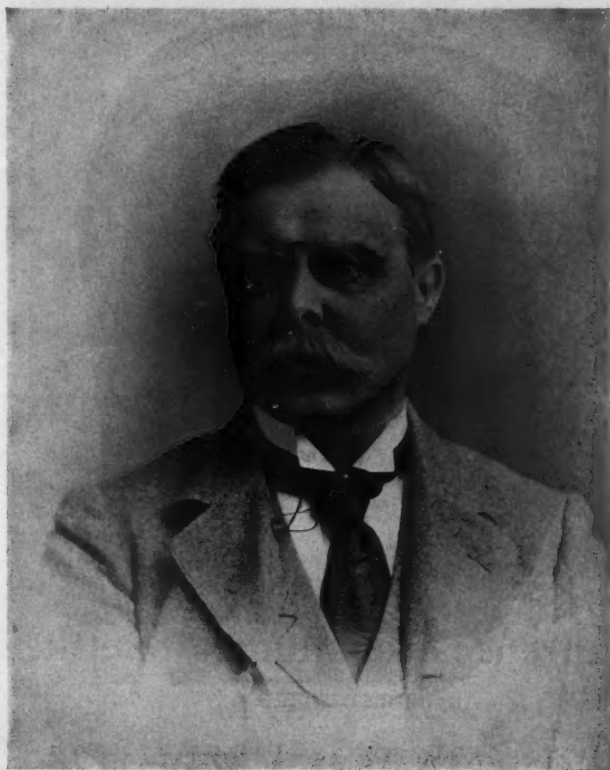


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PROFESSOR KUNO FRANCKE

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found the answering emotion of sheer pleasure in having heard a man feel like that.

One should add the names of three men who exhibit a tendency to write what is not purely scholastic, and give

ters," and with Mr. Copeland made an edition of Tennyson's "The Princess" and a booklet on "Freshman English," is the author, I see, of a story presently to appear in the *Atlantic Monthly*, bearing the Baconian title, "Wild Justice."



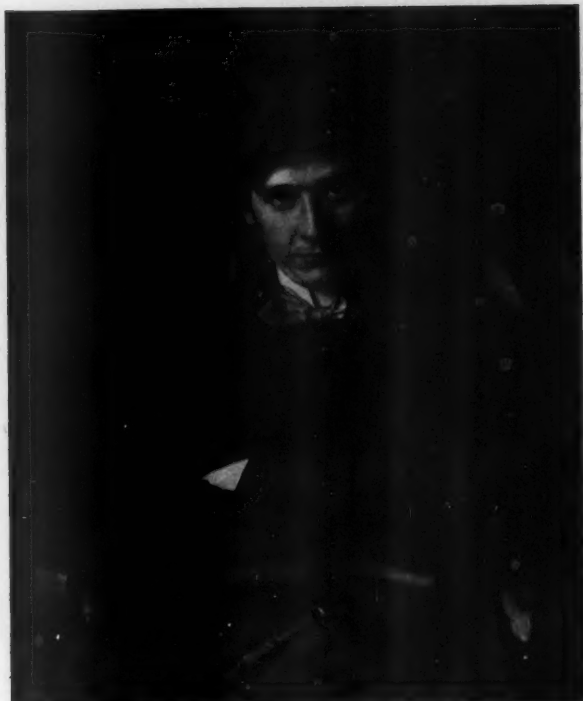


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MR. EDWARD GORDON CRAIG

Mr. Laurence Housman's "Bethlehem"

By CHRISTOPHER ST. JOHN

MR. LAURENCE HOUSMAN showed courage of no ordinary kind when he set himself to writing a play dealing with the Nativity. Had not that high and simple story been told once and for all in the Bible in a way calculated to frighten conscious art? Had not the rude Christmas plays of the early Church warned the modern mind off this holy ground? Had not any æsthetic exaltation which might be secured by the stage presentation of such a drama been produced unsurpassably by the Catholic Church in the simple singing of an ancient "Hodie"? In a word, could the modern man of letters, the man of "The Englishwoman's Love-Letters," hope to treat with art

a thing which wanted rude faith alone?

Well, I have seen Mr. Housman's play, and he has made a very good job, if I may be permitted that expression, of an undertaking of stupendous difficulty. In the first scene of the play—the drama is written in scenes rather than in acts—he has contrived to be simple. His shepherds are the shepherds of Milton's "Hymn to the Nativity."

Perhaps their loves—or else their sheep
It was that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

All is ordinary, peasant, and pagan. But at the very opening of the scene there is a suggestion that these rough quiet folk, with instincts undulled by



FIGURE FROM "BETHLEHEM"
(After a drawing by Mr. Gordon Craig)

residence in cities, will find no difficulty at all in accepting the message of Gabriel. Are they not accustomed nightly to contemplating the mystery of the stars?

Says the oldest of the shepherds:

You never seem to get no nearer to a star . . .
Walk after 'em a mile—they will seem just as far.

The youngest of the shepherds is, as is only right, the most poetical. He sings to his fellows—a song that “dallies with the innocence of love . . . like the old age.” This song shows Mr. Housman at his best.

The world is old to-night—
The world is old—
The stars around the fold
Do show their light,
And so they did, and so
A thousand years ago—
And so will do, dear Love, when you lie cold.

This song is introduced again with very beautiful effect in the third and last scene when the shepherds have come to Bethlehem and are kneeling round the Mother of God. As the young shepherd comes to the close of the verse, one of his comrades feels that the mention of death in this old and antique song of the pagan world is a jarring note in their harmony of joy, and hastily moves the singer to silence.

Nay, nay! the lad can sing no more thereof . . .
He has forgot the sadness of the end.

To go back to the first scene. The meditations of the shepherds are broken very simply and naturally by the appearance of Gabriel, who does not come in glory—such glory on the stage would only be the glory of pantomime—but steps across the sheepfolds, his angelship proclaimed by the effect of his appearance rather than by that appearance itself.

Why, who be yon fine gentleman in white,
Stepping across the sheepfolds to the right?
Another shepherd:
How comes it that his face be lit so bright?

The shepherds do up their packs and led by Gabriel and his angels take the

road for Bethlehem. The blind shepherd, Abel, is the only one who sees the heavens open.

The sense of bewilderment in these peasant minds is finely expressed by the lines given to the oldest of the shepherds:

. . . Lord, Lord, I doubt
Whether I'll know to find me way about
With such high things a-happening.

The second scene is on the road to Bethlehem. The three Kings with their followers, the shepherds, and a multitude of poor are pressing on, urged by an invincible faith, led by a star in heaven and on earth by the “little child” spoken of by the prophet.

The third scene is prefaced by a prologue conceived in the right spirit, and written with the right simpleness. The speaker of the prologue stands before the gate of just such a little town as one sees in 15th century wood-cuts.

Come, little town, your narrow doors undo,
And show how our dear Lord is born in you.

In the scene itself Mr. Housman's difficulties have grown too much for him. The Virgin appears—and but for the extraordinary stage treatment of Mr. Gordon Craig, I think we should have found this crowning wonder wounding or tedious according to our temperament.

Mr. Craig's work in this Nativity play is responsible for more than half the impression created on the stage, as I know that Mr. Laurence Housman would be the first to admit. Ellen Terry's son began as an actor. He has the sense of the stage in his blood. But he uses that sense in a way that has made his productions the most original and, as I and others will affirm with all the enthusiasm of which we are capable, the most beautiful that have been seen on the modern stage. It is now three years since Mr. Craig staged Purcell's opera, “Dido and Æneas,” and showed us that on the stage the appropriate need not be the realistic, nor the beautiful a pretty-pretty imitation of Nature. He designed his own scenery, dresses, and



FIGURE FROM "BETHLEHEM"
(After a drawing by Mr. Gordon Craig)

system of lighting. He devised movements for his crowd. He took everything into his own hands, and showed plainly that he had not only ideas, but the power to make them visible to others. His master was, in one word, fancy. His principle was, in one phrase, the adaptation of shape and space,—proportion, in fact.

I have a notion that you Americans with your quick, sensitive minds will recognize the merits of Mr. Craig's stage settings much more easily than we have done. My countrymen are very enthusiastic about new departures in æsthetic arts by foreigners, but when one of their own race gets up and tries to do something for beauty, they are contemptuous or indifferent.

The note struck in the first scene of the Nativity play is that of absolute stillness. The shepherds are sitting under a low penthouse, and they hardly move until the angel is seen stepping across the sheepfolds. In color, the scene is gray and cold. What is the scenery like, do you ask? It consists of a plain back-cloth of gray, but, subtly lit, it appeals to the imagination as the boundless sky of God.

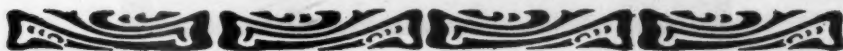
The second scene is dominated by a hill stretching from one side to the other. The sky, this time reflecting the majesty of kings, is intense purple. Down the hill come three groups winding slowly towards Bethlehem. The first King is in black, the second in gray, the third in white. There is plenty of deep and intense color in the first two groups—black and purple and white, black and purple and green and white; but the third group is gray and poor. In this group, "the grave, the sad, the poor, the bad," are represented by lepers, idiots, a murderer with red head and beard, who never kneels, a travelling marionette showman, a musician, some beggars, "one pretty."

In the last scene Mr. Craig, realizing the difficulty of making the Virgin's

self impress as divine, has constituted his energies and imagination on making her and the Christ felt through the actions and expressions of those simple ones who have come to worship. A striking effect is obtained when the shepherds kneel in a circle—the whole scene, a sort of amphitheatre, is in circles—round the Mother of God, and she, lifting the covering from the Child, lets a great light shine forth. The Divine Child is not seen by the audience, but through the illumined faces of the shepherds one is made to feel that He has been seen and known. The scheme of working in circles—that is, the divine and perfect figure—is an example of the symbolic element in Mr. Craig's staging.

The music for the Nativity play was written by Joseph Moorat, and has been supplemented by pieces from Palestrina, Bach, and Sweelinck. Without disrespect to Mr. Moorat's gift, it must be said that the supplementary music has been of the greatest advantage to the production.

The action of the Censor in refusing to grant the play a license need not be condemned. We can decide for ourselves whether it is better for the public to witness a religious drama staged with a beauty bound to exalt and an emotion bound to touch, or "The Girl from Kay's." But I may point out that by making it impossible for the performance to take place in a theatre, the Censor blessed rather than cursed. A high, narrow proscenium, such as one gets in all modern play-houses, is perhaps not the ideal frame for a play depending largely on its pictorial significance. At the Hall of the University of London the proscenium was low, and the stage as wide as that of Drury Lane. The effect was such that I was inclined to think that a stage on these lines should be taken into consideration by the builders of the theatres of the future.



In Spite of the Censor

By LAURENCE HOUSMAN

This article was contributed by Mr. Housman to the London *Daily Mail* and is reprinted here because of its direct bearing upon Mr. Christopher St. John's account of the play. The latter was written expressly for THE CRITIC.—Ed. CRITIC.

THERE is, it appears, a large body of opinion still existing in this country which refuses to regard the drama as on an equal footing with the rest of the arts. It has become so secularized, so cheapened by the glare of the footlights, so vulgarized by the "star" system and by advertisement, that its religious origin has been forgotten, and any attempt to restore it to its old position is considered not only impossible, but wrong. One may write religious poetry in a dramatic form with the consent of all; but if one endeavors to give it further shape and vitality, to make a harmonious appeal to all the faculties the mind possesses for delight in beauty, for the reverence of Divine things, the question is raised: Are you not going too far? Is your medium legitimate?

To such a question the only true answer may be: Have I gone far enough? Have I not altogether fallen short? That, at all events, is the point with which the artist must concern himself. He has no business to regard current prejudices or to yield to the artificial obstacles placed in his way; he has but to follow the healthy and inevitable rule of giving expression to those things which most seize hold on his imagination. There his business begins and ends; and all things that help him to that end are legitimate.

Having written my Nativity play, "Bethlehem," in the first place solely for my own satisfaction, I am producing it in order to convert others to the same mind. I wish to show that it is possible for the drama to come near, without irreverence, to the central truths of Christianity, and by symbolic action to quicken the imagination of the beholders so as to make the beauty of holiness more evident to them than it was before; so as to make time seem a very little thing where the great spiritual ideas which have moulded the

world's history are concerned; so as, if I may, to startle men's minds to a realization of whether for them Christianity is a curious relic of the past or a truth still living and central.

The only way in which this seemed at all possible was by treating my subject not as an isolated event of the past, but as an event without time, always happening, never old; the summing-up, as it were, of all the love and delight and wonder which have come to be associated with Christmas since it took its place in the making of the world. For this reason I have purposely avoided any attempt to give a naturalistic or a realistic rendering of the scene as it might have happened.

In spiritual matters the past tense is foolishness; everything "is," nothing "was." Christmas is not merely commemorated; it is in our midst year by year; and the present tense is the only one that can be applied to it. To make Christmas present in my play has been my chief aim. So my shepherds are not Hebrew shepherds; they are English and Christian. They do but rehearse, as do the peasants of Oberammergau, the event which already fills their lives. No explanation is needed as they run to Bethlehem, knowing already what awaits them there; and when they enter the stable it is as Christian worshippers coming to kneel by the "crib," and to say a "Hail, Mary!" before the Lady-Altar. My wish is to show how the thrill of the expected event can give as great a dramatic effect as the unexpected; that the knowledge of things does not in any degree lessen the wonder of them. An essential element of the drama will be its familiarity to those that hear it.

So, again, the Three Kings are no mere historic figures; they symbolize the kingly in mind, the thinkers and seers of the human race, who bring their desires to God, to be by Him en-

lightened and satisfied. And so, in the same way, the Virgin herself is the "Mother Mary," familiar already in name, to whom Christians love to address themselves. The halo of the reverence paid to her through all Christian ages is about her as she bends to receive her Son's guests, first shepherds, and then kings, and the lowly state in which our Lord was born is but slightly indicated amid the homage which this rehearsal of Christmas night brings.

If Christianity be true, it is because it is in men's minds and hearts; and the only way to give a true dramatic representation of the birth of Christ is surely that which takes count of all the significance it has come to hold in the history of humanity. For a sympathetic understanding of the play, time and place have to be put out of mind, or only allowed to act as sidelights on the movements of the characters.

My aim has not been to realize how in any likelihood the events of Christmas night took place, but I have tried to realize their appeal to the hearts of all to whom they convey a living truth. And so, to complete things, I have included in the play the events of the Epiphany, and have ended with the Flight into Egypt. That seemed to be the true dramatic end to a play on the Nativity. Love comes to earth, is recognized and worshipped by the humble and the pure-hearted, is driven away by the hatred of the proud. The world apparently resumes its way, the

manger is empty, the Heavenly signs remove themselves. What remains? The speaker of the epilogue turns from the empty stage and puts to the audience statement and question: Love is gone out into the world to win the hearts of men. Where has he found a place?

The play has been written, not with any aim at a fantastic revival of a mediæval form, but because I feel that there is working through the present day a great intellectual Catholic renaissance, a recognition not so much of the dogmatic truth as of the imaginative beauty of the Catholic presentment of Christianity. We are recovering from the too violent reactionary spirit of the Reformation, which, sweeping away good with bad, left spiritual imagination in this country hard and stern, and gave us, in place of the familiar tenderness which characterized the earlier spiritual writers, the cold splendor of Milton's Christianity in classical disguise, and the pugnacious piety of Bunyan.

The influence which is now so strangely making itself felt among men of many creeds is, I believe, that of St. Francis, whose touch, lying upon all the religious art of Italy during its great period, gave it that wonderful assimilative power, that native way of putting things which, in spite of its anachronisms, is so much the best for bringing home to humanity truths which are independent of time.





THE BATTERY IN 1830

Literary Landmarks of New York

By CHARLES HEMSTREET

SEVENTH PAPER

IN that cheerless precinct of New York City to which still clings the name St. John's Park, though there has been no park there this half-century; in Beach Street, a dozen or perhaps twenty steps from Hudson Street, there stands a house that could not fail to attract the attention of an observant passer-by. A brick building, its architectural features suggest roomy attractiveness—a condition little sought after in these days when the value of every inch of ground calls for compactness regardless of beauty of appearance. One looking at this building and given to sentiment might argue that it is strongly reminiscent of a human being who had once been vigorous and had made a considerable show in the world of fashion and pride, but who had sunk to poverty and decrepi-

tude. For the carved window-cases are hacked and beaten away, the wrought-iron railings are twisted and rusty, the marble steps are cracked and crumbling, the high ceilings with their heavy and ornate mouldings are seamed and discolored, and the massive oaken doors are cracked by many a rusty nail driven into them, holding ragged and worn-out garments. Yet even in its age and neglect are found traces of its primal sturdy and artistic proportions.

In the year 1821 this house was the home of James Fenimore Cooper. His first book, "Precaution," had failed utterly. His second book, "The Spy," had been prodigiously successful, when in this year he went to New York to live in what was then the fashionable district of St. John's Park. He was thirty-one years old, had lived at



HON. PHILIP HONE

Cooperstown, studied at Yale, shipped as a sailor before the mast, made voyages to England and Spain, been appointed midshipman, and seen service on Lake Ontario and Lake Champlain, had resigned his commission, and had married Augusta de Lancey at Heathcote Hill Manor, Mamaroneck. After the birth of his daughter, Susan Fenimore Cooper, who became a writer of rural sketches, he settled down in Westchester County to live the life of a country gentleman. He might have remained there all his days but that one day he got hold of a particularly stupid book of English life, and was so bored by it that it forced from him the exclamation that he could write a better himself! Which remark being interpreted literally by his wife, there was nothing for the country gentleman but to make good his boast. So he wrote a dull and stupid story which even his friends had difficulty in reading to the end, and then, doubtless finding writing more agreeable than farming, wrote another that destined him evermore to a literary life.

This much of Cooper's life was behind him when he moved into the Beach Street house. In this home

he wrote "The Pioneers," first of the famous Leatherstocking Tales and, too, "The Pilot."

In the New York of that day there was one place where he loved to go for a quiet dinner and discussion with the literary friends whom he quickly gathered around him. This was the chief hostelry of the day, the City Hotel, which stood close by where Wall Street runs into Broadway. It was at one of these dinners that he met James A. Hillhouse, who, though he had already written "The Judgment" and was rec-

ognized as a poet, was then engaged in mercantile pursuits in the city; but was very soon to make a home in New Haven and remain there during the rest of his life. Hillhouse was not a regular diner with Cooper, but he introduced there a friend who became much more regular in his attendance. Samuel Woodworth was even then shouldering aside adversity with intermittent



JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

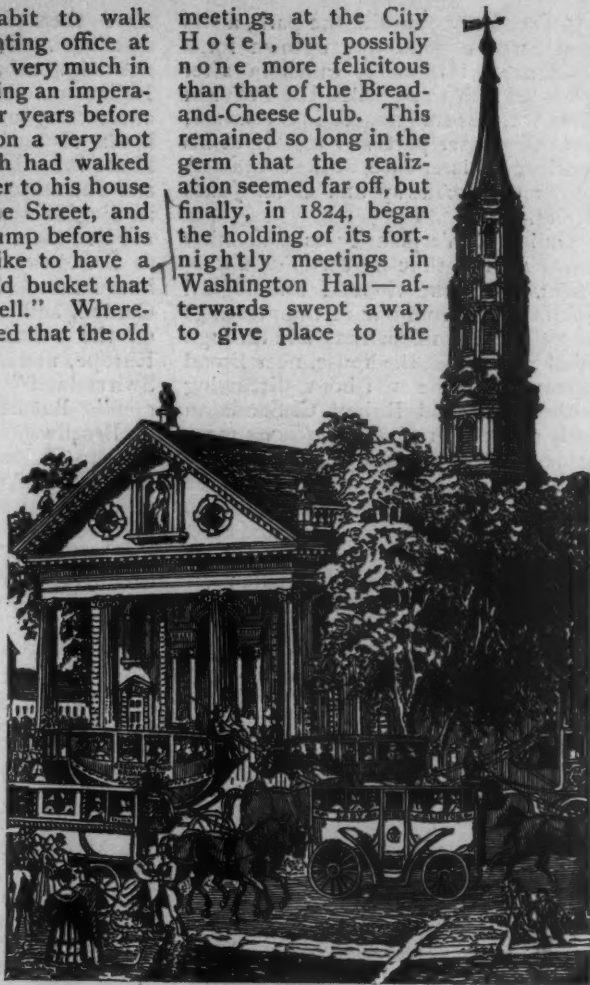
success. It was his habit to walk briskly up from his printing office at the foot of Wall Street, very much in the manner of a man having an imperative appointment. Four years before Cooper came to town, on a very hot summer day, Woodworth had walked in this same eager manner to his house farther uptown in Duane Street, and there, drinking from a pump before his door, had said: "I'd like to have a drink to-day from the old bucket that hung in my father's well." Whereupon his kindly wife hinted that the old bucket of his remembrance would make a good subject for a poem—a hint that within the hour took the form of "The Old Oaken Bucket," a pastoral poem well remembered and much sung, though many another of his, many an operetta, and even the historical romance, "The Champion of Freedom," have faded from memory.

At these dinners, when Cooper sat with his friends, Woodworth and Morris held the first discussions of the plans for *The Mirror*, which was started in 1823, but from which the inconstant Woodworth soon retired.

On more than one occasion one of the dinner party was Richard Henry Dana, a founder of the *North American Review* and the friend of Bryant. The City Hotel was quite convenient for him, for he had made a sort of headquarters in the place of Wiley, the publisher, around the corner in Wall Street by New Street. At that time he issued from Wiley's shop *The Idle Man*, that literary publication which scarcely lived long enough to include his novels, "Tom Thornton" and "Paul Felton," and some contributions from Washington Allston and Bryant.

Many a good idea came from the

meetings at the City Hotel, but possibly none more felicitous than that of the Bread-and-Cheese Club. This remained so long in the germ that the realization seemed far off, but finally, in 1824, began the holding of its fortnightly meetings in Washington Hall—afterwards swept away to give place to the



ST. PAUL'S CHURCH

Stewart Building at Broadway and Reade Street. The club derived its name from Cooper's conceit of having candidates balloted for with bread and cheese, a bit of bread favoring election and cheese deciding against it.

As Cooper had in the main originated the club he was the leading spirit around whom gathered Halleck and Bryant, Percival, Professor Renwick, Dr. J. W. Francis, and all the writers of the day. An enthusiastic member was Philip Hone, who had just retired from business and bought a house at

235 Broadway opposite the park, a site considered a good way uptown for a residence. His diary, which in after years led him to be called the Pepys of America, was commenced in this house, but the greater part was written at his residence of later date, at the southwest corner of Broadway and Great Jones Street.

Gulian C. Verplanck was a member too. At the time he occupied a professorship in the General Theological Seminary. From one of the meetings he walked down Broadway and through Wall Street past the house, near Broad Street, where he was born, discussing with Bryant and Robert C. Sands an early suggestion of *The Talisman* magazine, which was not to ripen into an accomplished fact for a good three years. On this same walk, too, he took part while Bryant and Sands discussed plans for the *Atlantic Monthly*, which Sands established the next year.

But writers were not the only members of the Bread-and-Cheese Club. There were scholars and professional men, and often there were statesmen and men of national distinction as guests. But as Cooper was its leading spirit, when he left for his trip abroad the club went to pieces. He started in 1825 on his foreign travels, and at the time of his going was living at 345 Greenwich Street, where he had finished work on "The Last of the Mohicans."

In the year after his going there was a gala night at the Lafayette Theatre, when "The Spy" was enacted. The Lafayette was the largest theatre then. Upon its site in West Broadway near Canal Street St. Alphonsus's Church now stands. To that performance came from up-State Enoch Crosby, who was said to be the original Spy, and when he appeared in a box with some friends the audience gave him a thunderous ovation.

Cooper returned from abroad in 1833, having added "The Prairie," "Red Rover," "Water Witch," and "The Bravo" to his list of published books, and went to live in Bleecker Street, two blocks from Broadway, near Thompson Street. This was a select neighbor-

hood then of pretty, irregular brick dwellings. The house is there yet, but the neighborhood is no longer elegant. Italian merchants, unkempt in appearance, carry on meagre and uncertain kinds of business, and Cooper's old house is so decorated with signs inside and out as to be picturesque only for its dinginess and disorder. Cooper did not live there long, for he soon moved to Broadway at Prince Street, into a house that later gave way to Niblo's Garden, and there he completed work on the volumes covering his stay in Europe, under the titles "Sketches in Switzerland" and "Gleanings in Europe." But he made no very long stay on Broadway, for he moved again, this time to St. Mark's Place, a few doors from Third Avenue, into an unpretentious brick house of three stories that is there still. There he wrote "Homeward Bound" and began in earnest that fierce combat with his critics which was to last to the end of his days and leave many a regret that he had not been a more even-tempered man. From this house he went to Coopers-town, which became his final home.

At the time that Cooper lived in New York there walked along Broadway, between Canal Street and the Chapel of St. Paul, on almost every pleasant afternoon, a man who in appearance was a veritable Hamlet. His garb was a customary suit of solemn black, and his eyes sought the ground as he moved with pensive step. This was McDonald Clarke, whose eccentric appearance and acts and whose melancholy verses gave him the name of The Mad Poet.

If Broadway was his walk of an afternoon, Park Row was his haunt by night; and Windust's place, a door or two below the Park Theatre (literally below it, for it was beneath the sidewalk), was his centring point.

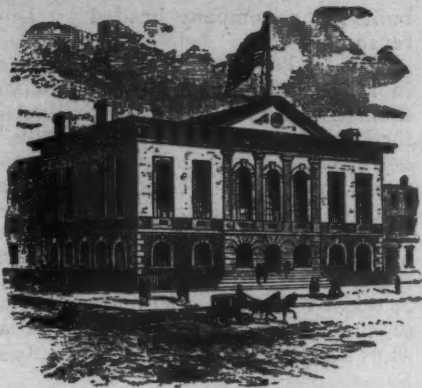
The resort of Edward Windust was not an old place, but a famous one. It was opened in 1824 and lasted only until 1837, when the proprietor thought himself cramped in space and opportunity and, moving away to seek a larger field, found failure. It was the actor's museum of the city. Its walls were

lined with reminders of the stage; play-bills, and swords that had seen the service of savage mimic wars; pictures, and frames of clippings, and bits of the wardrobes of kings and queens who had strutted their brief hour and passed away. It was the nightly gathering point of such actors as were in town, such writers, such wits, such gallant gentlemen. Edmund Kean and the Wallacks, Harry Placide and Cooper, Jack Scott, Mitchell, Brown, and Junius Brutus Booth were frequenters with Fitz-Greene Halleck, Willis, Morris, and the rest, who nightly crowded the tier of stalls that ranged along one side of the room, making them resound with gay and brilliant talk.

In Windust's, too, sat McDonald Clarke in gloomy majesty night after night. There he formed among many others the acquaintance of Mordecai M. Noah, journalist and playwright, who had been Consul at Tunis and who in the years to come was to start several unsuccessful papers, until in 1843 he was to publish the *Sunday Times and Messenger*, which continued for more than half a century.

From Windust's McDonald Clarke often wandered out into the City Hall Park over the way, and sat there through many a long summer night dreaming over his "Elixir of Moonshine," or, with the memory of his afternoon walks upon him, composing lines for his "Afara, or the Belles of Broadway," and many another melancholy verse. Often he sat there until daybreak, then went on into Broadway again. He had a favorite early-morning stand on the Fulton Street side of St. Paul's Churchyard, and there, an hour before the town was stirring, soliloquized as he looked through the railings at the brown tombstones.

On these same mornings, but a few hours later, another writer looked down on the same faded tombstones, for Ray Palmer was the teacher of a young ladies' school down Fulton Street beyond Broadway. He was young then, in his twenty-second year, in ill-health, and suffering under discouragements that would have been unendurable to a weaker-dispositioned man. As he



WHERE THE BREAD-AND-CHEESE CLUB MET

looked from the school window into the churchyard he wrote a hymn which remained in his desk for several years, until it was published in quite an accidental manner by Dr. Lowell Mason, when he needed material for a book of church music which he had compiled. In a few years this hymn, "My faith looks up to Thee," was to be sung oftener than any other American hymn.

The sights and the sounds of the busy city that were an inspiration to Ray Palmer always sent The Mad Poet in another direction,—on up Broadway to Leonard Street, turning down there two short blocks to Chapel Street, to the house where at that time he made his home. It was a dreary enough street and a dismal enough upper room, but there was a narrow window where the poet could look over the housetops in the midnight hour and watch the stars that he seemed ever to hold converse with. Or, if it was in the early evening, he had but to lean forward from his window to see the people going into the Italian Opera House on the next corner. The Italian Opera House had a great deal of attraction for The Mad Poet. Not that he went there often to attend the performances, but he liked to inspect it from his window height as though he caught a glimpse of the sorrows and disappointments connected with it. He had moved into the house in the year 1833—the year that the opera house was opened after it had been

built for a company headed by Lorenzo Da Ponte.

This Da Ponte had come to America in 1805, having a record as an Italian dramatist, who had furnished libretti for Mozart's operas, "Don Giovanni" and "Nozze di Figaro." He was professor in Columbia College when he matured an idea for establishing a home for Italian opera in New York, a plan which led to the building of the opera house near which The Mad Poet lived. It opened splendidly with the singers of the Cavalier di Rivafinoli, but a short season ended Lorenzo Da Ponte's hopes.

If The Mad Poet from his housetop could have seen what the next few years had in store, he would have beheld the aged dramatist dying at his home in Spring Street, close to Broadway, his body followed from there by his mourning friends—Halleck and Verplanck and Woodworth and some few others,—followed to the churchyard surrounding the nearby St. Patrick's Church; he would have seen the mark above the grave crumbling away, leaving nothing to point the spot where Da Ponte lay buried with his dreams and his hopes. But no inspiration hinted any of these things to McDonald

Clarke, and once, in speaking of Da Ponte, he said that there at least was a man who had lived long unrewarded but had attained his ambition at last.

For nine years after The Mad Poet went to the Chapel Street house his Broadway walks continued, his dress each year growing more shabby, his eye more downcast, and his verse more melancholy. Then one day he was seen close by his favorite stand near the churchyard of St. Paul, acting so strangely that he was thought to be intoxicated. Next morning he awoke to find himself a prisoner in a vagrant cell, and the shock to his sensitive nature sent him, a madman indeed, to the Blackwell's Island Asylum, where in a few days he died.

Years after, the author of "Glimpses of Home Life," Emma C. Embury, whose home was in Brooklyn, told of a knoll in Greenwood Cemetery by the side of a little lake where the oak trees shaded a modest tomb on which there were some lines of verse. They were lines written by McDonald Clarke. The tomb is there yet, still shaded by oaks that have grown sturdier with the passing years, and the grave by the lake is the grave of The Mad Poet.



THE LAFAYETTE THEATRE

"The Decay of the Novel"

By John Kendrick Bangs, "Mary Adams," Richard Whiteing, H. G. Wells, Thomas Hardy, W. E. Norris, Jerome K. Jerome, Eden Phillpotts, Arthur Morrison, W. L. Courtney, Coulson Kernahan, John A. Steuart, E. F. Benson, Percy White, Shan F. Bullock, Silas K. Hocking, William Le Queux, George Manville Fenn, G. B. Burgin, Joseph Hocking, Jane Barlow

Last month we printed a striking paper on "The Decay of the Novel" by Benjamin Swift. We now publish a series of interesting communications from other eminent novelists on the same subject.

On the Novel's Decay

There's but little to say.

The art of great writing's a gift.

The fault is not ours,

But that of the Powers

That made us and Benjamin Swift.

So instead of the rap

And the buffet and slap

With which the "profession" is scored,

It would pay this harsh critic,

Of views so mephitic,

To send his complaints to the Lord.

JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.

BY "MARY ADAMS," AUTHOR OF "THE CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE"

IT would be impossible, in the space permitted, properly to treat the essay to which you ask my rejoinder; and one would choose to defer or omit any vital literary discussion upon which one cannot enter with the leisure and thoroughness belonging to the literary sense.

Mr. Swift's position, if I understand it, seems to be founded upon certain undeniable tendencies of our day in which writers, editors, and publishers are all, if not equally, involved. Instead of analyzing the evils that he deplores, may I suggest a remedy which, if it cannot reach what physicians call "the complex of symptoms," may, at least, hit one or two of them?

The secret of all successful living or doing is individuality. Nothing is more obviously or swiftly fatal than timidity. Power casteth out fear; and courage is, after all, the master, not the servant, of success. As long as we are afraid of our publisher, our editor, our

bookseller, our critic, or our public, we shall not create. We may imitate, we may defer, we may conform, we may sell, we may circulate, we may be the fashion, but we do not create.

It may be questioned whether the creative faculty in our literature has a worse enemy than the modern reviewer, whose equipment may be as mythical as his power is disproportionate. A publisher once spoke in terms of tremulous delight of the flattering notice of an important philosophical book, which had appeared in the columns of a city daily. It happened that the writer of that review was a slip of a girl just out of the high school. Possibly she was eighteen; and certainly she was the daughter of the managing editor.

It seems to be more than doubtful if writers are benefited by the habit of reading reviews of their own books. How widely spread this habit is, ask our clipping bureaus. Even a young writer who has achieved but one book will be pursued by the pertinacity of these brokers; each one seeking to prey

upon the vanity or the timidity of an inexperienced author, urging her attention to the opinions which have clashed over her little venture. These appeals may obviously reduce the terrors of the coal famine, and keep one's hearth aflame.

For why should one bestir one's self to follow this kaleidoscope called criticism? Your book is literature; your book is trash. Your art is beyond imitation; your art is past praying for. Your plot is as absorbing as a thunderstorm; your plot is as dull as a dog-day. You have inspiration, you have genius, you have style; you are mechanical, unendowed, and destitute of manner. Your aim is noble; your aims are paltry. Your book is lofty and consecrated; your book is immoral and unholy. Thus the reviewers. Why concern yourself? It is a toss-up whether they can interpret the heart of your *motif*, or if they wilfully ignore it. A distinguished editor once said of certain reviewers of a prominent book: "They cannot understand the things of the spirit, and this infuriates them."

It is only because my view of this matter is the result of conviction rather than of experience that I hesitate at all to offer it to older and abler writers; for I am as sure as inexperience can be of anything, that I am right in saying: One of the first conditions of a strong and original literature is that its creators should, to an extent which we may hardly limit, ignore their critics. For the speech and language of these is the tongue of Babel; individuality is deafened by the jargon, and courage turns dizzy before it.

Suppose we say outright, and are content to abide by the saying: Do not read your reviewers if you wish to keep your pen strong, your temper sweet, your courage high, or your humility low. Let them alone. Rarely can they help you; often will they harm. Your book is your own, and the fault or the merit thereof. You may make a worse or a better next time; but, for better or worse, make it in freedom of soul, in peace of mind, in strength of heart, in ignorance of venom, in remoteness from praise. It seems a sim-

ple thing to do; one is surprised that writers so often find it difficult. "I really think I could not do *that*," said an American novelist; but he spoke rather wistfully. And it is known that there are one or two of the leading writers of this country who have long ago adopted the admirable rule laid down by George Eliot. She did not read published notices, either kind or cruel, wise or foolish, of the books which she had written.

She gave the people of her best,
Her worst she kept; her best she gave,

and more than that, who can or shall?

Publishers and editors will pay attention enough to the champagne or the vitriol which is offered by our newspapers and periodicals to the makers of many books. The author, I suggest, is the last person in the world who should trouble himself therewith. I do not think it would be easy to overestimate the extent to which creative power and courage would be stimulated by this simple form of independence.

BY RICHARD WHITEING

I agree in wellnigh everything with what Mr. Benjamin Swift has said, and yet with a qualification. I do not think he has quite accurately defined the uses and purposes of the modern novel. It is not, at its best or its worst, so much a mode of giving readers, careless or otherwise, mere easy access to the problems of the day. It is, in its essence, something quite different, namely, a statement of those problems in the terms of passion and feeling. There is—say the historical view of a subject, the moral and didactic, the scientific, and so on. But over and above all these, or rather apart from them, there is its relation to human emotion; and that is fiction. So fiction is neither in its nature a better thing nor a worse thing than other forms of literature, a more profound thing or a less profound thing, it is simply another form, one standing wholly by itself. That is one reason why the novel is now said to be poaching on the preserves of its neighbors. It is not doing anything of the sort, it

is only claiming its right to a share in the sport. It has been warned off so many fields, and it is now coming into its own, perhaps with rather an ugly rush, yet at the same time with a wholly excusable energy.

Novelists were told for long years, and were foolish enough to believe it, that they must not deal with "problems." Yet they had to do it under an irresistible temptation, and they found their legitimate reward. The prohibition probably meant no more in its origin than a sense of the extreme difficulty of the task. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was a problem novel, and it had some success. "Bleak House" was the problem of Chancery Reform stated in the novelist's terms of feeling and passion.

So I think the novel, problem or other, and no matter what its range, has neither to make any excuses, nor to look down on other modes of literature; it has simply to take itself for what it is, and to remember that its function is one of those that can never die. There are problem pictures, and problem statues, like the novel, neither right nor wrong in themselves, but only as they are good or bad.

I agree with Mr. Swift that a good deal of the literature of the day is extremely superficial, and that it ministers to the needs of a public that insists on being fed on scraps. It is deplorable, but it is still better than nothing. Remember this huge public has, till now, hardly had any kind of appetite for anything, and the everlasting snack is one way, though of course not the best one, to give it the beginnings of a longing for the intellectual feast of life. The public is a huge infant, and its appetites follow the infant's law. It reads at first, and necessarily, as a child reads, from picture books and stories of the marvellous and what not, and it is only at a much later stage of the business that it feels the imperious need of analyzing these impressions into processes of thought.

BY H. G. WELLS

I regret very much that the pressure on time prevents my giving the at-

tention I should like to do to your very interesting question. Mr. Swift impresses me as having on the whole correct but fragmentary views of the present state of affairs. His title, however, "The Decay of the Novel," is mere nonsense, and worthier of Sir Edward Clarke than of a man of literary education. The novel has altered its form—it is shorter, has fewer "characters" and more shape, symmetry, and directness than it had in the sixties. The Titanotherium has given place to the horse in this field. But for the life of me I can't see any decay in its quality. Consider—taking instances haphazard—the character-drawing and the texture of Mr. Joseph Conrad, the painstaking neatness of Mr. Jacobs (who is nevertheless popular), the quality of "Anthony Hope," the artistic care of E. A. Bennett. I believe "Paul Kelter," for example, would have stood as high among its contemporaries if it had been published in the fifties, or higher, than it does to-day. How good was Gissing's "Charlatan" again! How altogether magnificent was all that was not altogether bad in "Kim"! Think, too, of the vigor of Mr. Morley Roberts, the tapestry colorings of Mr. Maurice Hewlett, the writing of Mr. Pugh's "Tony Drum," and Mr. Arthur Morrison's work. And what is wrong with Mr. Marriott Watson's "Godfrey Merivale"? Other names come crowding to my mind. Decay of the novel indeed! . . .

Mr. Swift's idea that a Literary Academy in England at the present time could be anything but the last refinement of vulgarity suggests an ignorance of human nature quite surprising in a novelist of Mr. Swift's respectability.

BY THOMAS HARDY

The author writes with force and insight when he says that the immoral book is the book which hides truth and creates a fool's paradise and a mirage that misleads.

BY W. E. NORRIS

I have read with interest the article on "The Decay of the Novel" which

you have been so good as to send me. One may perhaps sympathize with the writer's views and yet not altogether share them. Personally, I do not think that the vast stream of novels with which we are flooded to-day is bringing about any decay in the branch of literature which it nominally represents, nor, indeed, that it has much to do with literature at all. What has happened is, I take it, that the spread of education has brought into existence a largely increased number of readers who cannot be expected to have a great deal of taste or discrimination, and whose demands are met in a manner satisfactory to themselves. This does not prevent good work from being produced, and in the long run good work is always recognized. The present period may not happen to be one of very great novelists; yet it seems to me that with writers like Meredith, Hardy, Rudyard Kipling, Henry James, and Anthony Hope, contemporary fiction is in no such bad way. That the works of other authors, unquestionably inferior in a literary sense, should command a far larger sale is really not in the least surprising, nor do I see why it should be disheartening. The novel—in respect of form—is perhaps just now passing through a transition stage; but it is quite sure to survive that stage, being far too convenient a vehicle to be dispensed with either by writers or readers. As for the general public taste, I am afraid it is not very likely to improve. Nevertheless, one must admit that the public always does, consciously or unconsciously, end by doing homage to the real thing, while the ephemeral sham is forgotten. It is a pity, of course, that there should be sham art of any kind; but I venture to doubt whether shams have much more power for evil than they have for good.

BY JEROME K. JEROME

The form of the novel will change with the changing ages. But delight in the pictured story—in the imagined life—will remain with us till man has ceased to dream.

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS

I find myself much in accord with Mr. Swift's admirable and well-reasoned paper. With the title of it alone I quarrel. English fiction is like the sea. Around about its shores much trash and decaying rubbish shall be found thrown up by every tide, but the great heart of the water is sweet and wholesome.

To-day, since Blackmore has passed, and Hardy and Meredith have ceased from their labors, we lack a leader who may be accorded rank with the greatest, but many writers—notably Swift himself—are doing sound, honorable work. The dignity of letters is worthily upheld. Our best fiction is careful, conscientious, even distinguished, though it falls short of the masterly when compared with great models.

Concerning the mass of fiction, it is written by the half-educated for the half-educated. The flame and stench of stuff that sells its hundreds of thousands of copies is mistaken for light and sweetness by the mass of readers. They know no better, and, candidly, I do not think the writers know better either. How should they? To produce their highly popular pieces they must lack the training, the refined instinct, the taste, the knowledge of their tongue, and the art-sense that all go to noble work.

But, upon the whole, novelists do their best. The man who writes down to the public for money is very rare. The few who might have occasion to do so would feel no temptation. I have little sympathy with the theory that we must meet the reader half way. Indeed there is some intellectual arrogance in the assumption that any such concession is necessary. If our work is to stand over to-morrow, it will not be by making concessions that we shall secure it that lengthened lease of life, or by thinking of the lending library.

As for the future of English fiction, look after education, and fiction will look after itself.

BY ARTHUR MORRISON

Mr. Benjamin Swift's article is excellent, and I think I can add little or

nothing to it. But the people of any age or country will get the art they deserve, and when they deserve none they will get none. For the artist, after all, is first a human creature, with human needs, perhaps a human wife and family, and a human regard to their welfare; and after a certain period of struggle he will come to regard the gratification of his instinct for perfection as a selfish gratification, not to be indulged in at the expense of those dependent on him. For it is the instinct for perfection alone that makes the artist, and it is its co-existence with executive ability that produces good art, not, as the ignorant often suppose, a foolish craving for that applause from the artist's inferiors which we call "fame."

BY W. L. COURTNEY

I am afraid I have nothing useful to say in reference to the article you have been good enough to send me, on "The Decay of the Novel." Through most periods of the world's history, the cry of degeneration and decay has been heard, and the number of those who care for really artistic work has always been small in comparison with those who are attracted by garishness and melodramatic effects. But so long as there are earnest workers, so long will literature last; and I should say that the case of the novel is not hopeless when we have men like Mr. Joseph Conrad and Mr. Benjamin Swift enjoying, if not wide popularity, at all events universal respect from thinking men.

BY COULSON KERNAHAN

Many thanks for letting me see the extremely interesting article which one of the most brilliant of our younger novelists has written for your magazine. How entirely I agree with him is, I think, evident from an article which I wrote and printed twelve months ago. Here is the opening passage of my article:

"Much of the fiction-writing of to-day is but almsgiving to the unimaginative. It is the building of a sort of Parish Poor House, where the men-

tally-destitute may doze away a stagnant existence. As long as we have eyes, ears, and brains—and use them—we find life full of imaginative beauty, of color, and of romance. But when we cease to use eyes, ears, and brains, life's warm and glowing colors fade into monotonous drab, and we fall back upon fiction to work the miracle again for us."

In regard to what Mr. Swift says about education, I am of opinion that, as far as literature is concerned, the introduction of the School Board has had an injurious rather than an elevating effect. The School Board has *not* created a taste for literature. It has been a godsend to the publishers and promoters of periodicals of the "Scrap," "Bit," and "Cut" description, but I fancy that the publishers of books and periodicals of a more serious and enduring kind have suffered rather than benefited by our boasted educational system. And I think too that the "dangerous" "little knowledge" of the same system is at the bottom of much of the cheap and shallow scepticism and indifference to religion which are infinitely more prevalent to-day than they were twenty or thirty years ago. Our School Board system is not a success. It has turned the efficient and fairly paid carpenter into an inefficient and under-paid clerk; the faithful family "domestic" of thirty years ago into a discontented and impertinent woman with airs and ideas that make neither herself nor any one else the happier, the better, or the wiser for the change.

BY JOHN A. STEUART

I cannot pretend to be surprised at finding Mr. Benjamin Swift among the pessimists. A cultured, metaphysical Scot thrown into the midst of crude weltering melodrama, his judgment was inevitable. To a practitioner of the condemned art, not without his own modest aspirations, that judgment must in the nature of things be painful; and as Mr. Swift is himself a novelist of distinction, one may imagine he wrote "The Decay of the Novel" with a bleeding heart. He grieves, and

alas! the cause of his grief is too rampant, too blatant to be denied. That a vast proportion of contemporary fiction is written *ad captandum vulgus*, in other words, is produced as the renowned Bobus made sausages, not with any notion of excellence, but merely to be vendible, is a fact to be taken with joy or sorrow according to one's point of view. The industry is immense and pleasingly varied. There is the pornographic novel, written mostly by ladies to prove what terrible fellows they are when they divest themselves of modesty; there is the gushy-sentimental, drenched with facile tears; there is the pseudo-scientific, that aims at the moon and loses itself in the inane; there is the ultra-sensational, that would fain make our flesh creep but seldom succeeds; there is the persistently facetious, that grins vacuously through its horse-collar and discharges feeble jokelets like penny crackers through every paragraph of its depressing course; there is the Scott-Dumas-Stevenson romance, with its stale devices and its beaten ways to foregone conclusions; and there are others. In harmony with the spirit of the age, several of these varieties are talked into phonographs or clattered off on typewriters almost while you wait. The rate of production is prodigious. 'A single factory in full blast will turn you out, apparently with equal ease, six or sixteen works of fiction (according to demand) in a year. At such a time, in such conditions, Mr. Swift talks of excellence!

At least some of the evils he deplores are due to the execrable stuff provided for young readers. There are notable exceptions, but in general writers of "juvenile" books and periodicals alike seem to conspire against intelligent youth, and succeed so well that in an appalling number of cases the taste is hopelessly vitiated before the unlucky reader reaches the adult stage. Then there is the Board School which teaches the art of reading, but neglects the gift of intelligence and knows neither the meaning of culture nor the love of literature. It is mostly its pupils who besiege the bookstalls for the "literary

snacks" of which Mr. Swift speaks with just disdain.

Nevertheless there is still a remnant left in Israel. We have yet with us two novelists to whom the epithet "great" would not be misapplied. Behind them is a small band of younger spirits not wholly destitute of a feeling for style, of true humor, originality, and the creative, dramatic imagination. These are the makers of character, and their number is perhaps as great as it was in any one period of our history during the last hundred and fifty years.

BY E. F. BENSON

I have read Mr. Swift's article with interest, but I am afraid I neither can nor will give you my views on the subject of "The Decay of the Novel," since I am largely employed in writing them, and thus have no business to express an opinion, any more than a doctor in practice has any business to write on the decay of the medical profession. Personally, I don't believe novels are any worse now—*i. e.*, the best of them—than they ever have been. Because an enormous number of indifferent novels are written, it does not follow that the art of novel-writing is perishing, but only that an increased number of folk are attempting to practise it. If I go on, I shall express an opinion, so I will stop.

BY PERCY WHITE

I don't think that there are grounds for the assumption that the novel is artistically declining. If there are more worthless novels written to-day it is because more people write. Probably seventy-five per cent. of the stories and romances published are destitute of literary importance, still, on the whole, fiction seems to me more closely modelled on reality and nearer to life and human interests than it used to be. It is true we have no giants—no Thackerays or Scotts—but I fancy I can detect in the best modern fiction subtleties and delicate values lacking in this country in the novel of any other period. A public gets the literature it deserves. There is a big mob of indo-

lent uninstructed readers who prefer rubbish. The man or woman who can catch the taste of this horde circulates by the hundred thousand. Commercially it is a market worth fighting for. Artistically it is a Slough of Despond in which literature perishes. At the same time there is a discriminating public reader, I believe, than at any time, to recognize and encourage real merit. Novel-writing is both a beautiful art and a trade. The success of the literary tradesman and the obvious demerits of his produce (as well as the popular demand for it) are the main excuses for this lament about our present literary degeneracy.

BY SHAN F. BULLOCK

Mr. Swift, I gather, is oppressed with the commercial spirit which he finds pervading the English literature of to-day, the spirit which tempts our literary artists to sell their artistic souls, which lifts the charlatans to the seat of the mighty, and which slowly is poisoning the wholesome springs of our imaginative literature.

Well, Mr. Swift has reason for what he says; but to my mind he has not all the reason or the best reason. I am not sure that English imaginative literature is in decay, or that the state of the novel is hopeless; nor can I quite agree that the commercial spirit is wholly responsible for the suppression, or depression, or corruption of our literary artists.

Is the commercial spirit, I should like to know, any stronger in English literature to-day than it was in the times, say, of Thackeray and Dickens, Tennyson and Scott? These men, I think, were not averse from writing for money; yet no one says that in consequence they killed, or sold, or corrupted their artists' souls, or became artisans, or "delivered bad goods because they were under contract." Indeed it might be said, in the case of one at least of the four, that he was never so much an artist as when under the stimulus of the commercial spirit; whilst of all it may be said that having the best goods in store they disposed

of them in the best markets, and that they attained to fame and popularity, despite commercialism or any combination of isms, just because it was in them to triumph and attain.

Well, and what of to-day? Does Mr. Swift seriously believe that among us are potential Thackerays and Tennysons, whose artistic souls are strangled, or hampered, or corrupted by the commercial spirit, and who find it therefore impossible to make utterance of their mighty souls? Surely he of all men knows well that the real artist will out as inevitably as murder, and surely he knows better that the world is hungering after its new Dickens, or Tennyson, or Scott, and is ready to devour him not only with fame and popularity but with wealth beyond the dreams of avarice. And, to make an end, does he not know best of all that the reason his friends with artistic souls are in eclipse is because they have not strength to burst through, are not great enough, are not good enough—in a word, are not able, for all their striving and whining, to propitiate the commercial spirit with oblations of great literature?

BY SILAS K. HOCKING

I gather from the title of Mr. Benjamin Swift's article that he believes the novel is smitten with decay; the article itself, however, scarcely bears out the assumption. Indeed, in its last paragraph he admits that all that the imaginative writer "who feels the real passion of creative work" needs, is "freedom for creation." That he has such freedom even Mr. Swift will not deny. Why, then, is the novel decaying? Why should it decay? Have all the imaginative writers "who feel the passion of creative work" come under the baleful influence of the commercial spirit? Have the men of genius and passion, like "the literary clowns and mountebanks," sold their souls for gain? Are there no creative writers left who have strength enough and courage enough to pour out their souls in their books careless of what the unwashed crowds may think or say? They have

their freedom; and there is always an audience for the living voice. Why do they neglect their opportunity?

If the novel is decaying, it means that men are decaying. They either lack the genius to write great novels or they lack the courage to give their genius play. To complain of editors and publishers is to give the whole case away. Are our writers of genius—the men “who feel the real passion of creative work”—the bond-slaves of those who distribute their wares?

Mr. Benjamin Swift's own work is an answer to that question. I am not aware that editors and publishers have ever laid an embargo on genius. I should be very much surprised to hear that they are doing so to-day. It does not seem to me at all likely that George Meredith, and Thomas Hardy, and J. M. Barrie, and Rudyard Kipling have troubled themselves about settling or unsettling “the obsolete ideals of an effete coterie.” And there are plenty of editors and publishers who will take their wares without asking any questions.

That there may be writers who prostitute their gifts for the sake of gain is quite possible, and yet why they should do so is difficult to see, since good work—from a financial point of view—pays better than bad. Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, Kipling, Barrie, have all done well out of their novels on the low ground of *£. s. d.* Hence, the temptation is not to play down, as Mr. Swift thinks, but to play up.

Even the literary clowns and mountebanks whom Mr. Swift dismisses so contemptuously are, I fancy, in the main doing their best, and some of them are, perchance, not without hope that they may be able to do good work in the future.

There is freedom for all imaginative writers, good, bad, and indifferent; and the better their work, as a rule, the better their pay. Those who get the kudos get the gold also. Hence, if the novel is decaying,—which I do not believe,—it simply means a decay of men, a decay of genius, and vision, and moral courage.

BY WILLIAM LE QUEUX

Mr. Benjamin Swift appears to miss the point of the present literary activity. In my opinion, it does not mark a decay of the art of the novelist, but rather the evolution of a new order of fiction from which we can, as this thirst for cheap literature dies down, expect a great school of writers. At present I admit we are doomed to read a vast amount of crude journeyman fiction and machine-made romance, but for the most part it is wholesome fiction and pure romance; and therein lies the secret of my hope. There is no fear that the “ferocious literary activity” will drive “the genuine article” out of the market. The real mischief consists of the fact that the genuine article is so hard to find. This, I think, is the complaint of nearly all the publishers, editors, and literary agents at the present moment, and I am sure it is well founded. Personally, I fear Mr. Benjamin Swift does not discriminate. There are great novels like “Nancy Noon” it is true, but there are also great novels like “Sentimental Tommy”; and it seems to me a pity that he does not recognize the importance of the art concealed in both.

BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN

With respect to the decay of the novel, I must own that a great deal of very bad work is most certainly now issued from the press, but it is more than balanced by a great deal of good, and from what I see, going back in my readings to the very oldest writers, this has always been the case in literature, just as it has been in every other form of art. Civilization has gone on here and there with mighty strides, and our acts and deeds are far in advance of those handed down by our ancestors; but men's natural minds seem to me to have changed as little as our bodies.

There are the same needs and desires as there were of old, and the most ancient stories that have been carried down in folk-lore, graven in stone, written on papyrus or the skins of beasts, have a wondrously near resemblance in principle to those which come

BY G. B. BURGIN

teeming forth from the modern press. There are tales that are pitifully small and weak, such as in their simplicity are loved of the many from their easiness of comprehension, and those of sterner, more passionate material, which appeal to minds of greater mould—the few. For the reading world is not made up of Sir Edward Clarkes and Mr. Benjamin Swifts by a long, long way. The vast majority of men and women—healthy men and women—care nothing for, find no interest in, the philosophical, psychological, or the unhealthily morbid. They do not read for the stimulation of the brain, but demand in their thousands the everyday life-like and real for their substantial good, while at the same time they are ready enough to accept literary pickles and pepper, sweet trifles, and fruit—unfortunately forbidden fruit—by way of a change; but to say that the novel is in a state of decay is, to use a homely term, all fudge. Take the by-gone generations and count those in each who have come down to us hall-marked by the stamp *genius*. There were in each scores of writers, but how many that we look upon as great? While as to the rest, how much do they differ save in number from those who are writing now? It is a hackneyed saying that time is the touchstone of merit, and that only the best works survive. We have just ended the nineteenth century, so let us compare with its productions the novels of the eighteenth that have survived,—those said to be the best. I am afraid the student would shrug his shoulders and say, what must the worst have been!

Certainly I can agree with Mr. Benjamin Swift in some things, for great stars are not yet to be seen rising above the literary horizon, but one can see plenty that, if not of the first, second, or third magnitude, yet give forth a good, clear, satisfying light. There was a man once who was asked if he did not long for the ambrosia of the gods. "No," he said, "not so long as I can get good wholesome bread and cheese," which of course meant that which was not in a state of decay.

In a somewhat frivolous mood, I picked up the "proof" of Mr. Benjamin Swift's article, but, as I read, I was converted. Mr. Swift is so temperate, so moderate, his statements are so true, that one is bound to consider them seriously, although there are many difficulties in the way of "that new creative force of which literature is always full." The main one, I take it, is that its producers are always empty.

For look you: as a rule, your publisher hankers to be full. He says to himself: "I cater for thousands of people of all kinds. Do they want literature? No. They want adventure, incident, no matter how strained or forced. They want the virtuous hero (in spite of his always being such a bad man of business) to marry the virtuous maiden, and the unvarnished villain to go to 'where the worm dieth not.' I am in this business to live, not to produce books at a loss for the cultured few." That "characterization" by which Mr. Swift so rightly sets such store does not interest the general reader. Pile up the agony, drag in melodrama by the hair, cut the cackle and come to the 'osses, forge wills, outrage coincidence, season with a dash of hysteria, a *soupeçon* of impropriety, serve up with a murder a chapter, and "the great heart," etc., will throb for you alone.

But a novel cannot be said, like a forgotten cheese, to "decay" because it does not sell. You cannot hall-mark merit by the number of copies sold of a particular book. "Mostly fools," said Carlyle: and because fools unite in their numbers to do a foolish thing, their action does not make literature of rubbish. If merit went by numbers, Whitaker and Old Moore should reign supreme. It is not "all beer and skittles" for the author who sells his literary soul and conscience for the cheap baubles of a day; incidentally, also, to live. He is rather worried sometimes by what his fellow-authors say of him and his "mess of pottage." But then, think of the temptation to

write "popular stuff." Have you ever known the tragedy of starving in a garret, of waiting for the postman's step upon the creaking stair? Have you ever seen the shy, sensitive genius starving about the streets, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, only praying mutely to God above all that noisy traffic to take him out of it? Have you ever experienced what it is to shiver with cold and hunger and yet know that by prostituting your soul you can gain riches, affluence, the approval of your fellows? If so, and you are an author, pray for the vision that came to Chiaro:

"Chiaro, servant of God, take now thine art unto thee, and paint me thus, as I am, to know me: weak as I am, and in the weeks of this time; only with eyes which seek out labor, and with a faith, not learned, yet jealous of prayer. Do this; so shall thy soul stand before thee always, and perplex thee no more."

I take it, as a matter of fact, that there are more good novels written every year than have ever been written before; that the apparent decay of the novel is because the bad novels attract more attention than the good ones, for the reason that the average standard of literary taste is not sufficiently educated to discriminate between the good and the bad. But the good novels are there, for all that. Is not the apparent lack of appreciation of good work by the reading public largely because the select few have become merged in the masses, and the verdict of the masses swamps the verdict of the few?

"The times are out of joint"; so also is the nose of the man who writes according to the dictation of his own soul, and does not keep a shrewd eye on the "market." The only alternative for him is to cease to yearn after the fleshpots. If he prizes them above his own soul, he must suffer accordingly. An author knows when he has done good work; that should suffice him—if he can contrive to live; but he should not assume that because his work fails to obtain popular recognition it is necessarily bad. Rather, when he

thinks of the jerry-built reader sitting in his jerry-built villa, rejoicing in jerry-built melodrama, should he be filled with compassion—both for the jerry-built reader who knows not what he misses, and for himself who would doubtless gain by the enlargement of the jerry-built reader's powers of appreciation of what is good. Besides, the reader who is ignorant does not know what he misses. He is doing to the best of his ability his allotted work in the world—that of enabling the "literary clowns and mountebanks" of the hour to dance their "brief tarantella" for the derision—no, not derision—for the pity of wise men.

BY JOSEPH HOCKING

I have read with great interest Mr. Benjamin Swift's article on the above-named subject. It is a calm, reasoned statement of his views concerning the fictional literature of our times. Moreover, no one can, I think, deny that, assuming his attitude, he has presented a strong case. Nevertheless, in the main, I do not agree with him. Let us bear in mind that the title of his article is "The Decay of the Novel."

The use of such a title suggests that the novel of our time is not so strong, so true, or so valuable as the novel of previous generations. The reason he urges for this is "that the conditions under which modern imaginative work is produced are such as to encourage the creation not of the reality but of the counterfeit." But this immediately suggests another question. Were the conditions under which the writers worked, whose novels were so much superior to those of the present time, more favorable to the production of "reality" than those of our degenerate age?

Admitting that there is a desire on the part of novelists to obtain large sales for their books, admitting also that the commercial spirit enters very largely into the book-world, is it proved that there is more of this spirit to-day than in those days when, according to Mr. Swift, the novelist's work was far superior to that of to-day? Was the

old Grub Street superior to the new Grub Street? Were the conditions of those authors whose means of subsistence depended on the smile of a patron, or the humor of a bookseller, more favorable to good work than those of to-day? If my reading of the struggles of the old bookmen be true, there was as great if not a greater temptation to yield to the spirit of Mammon then than there is to-day.

Moreover, is Mr. Swift's estimate of the book-buying public correct? He says: "The public go to the bookstall as they go to the buffet. They are in need of literary snacks, and a book which does not possess the virtues of a pick-me-up is generally rejected." Is that true, in the main? Is it not generally the case that the best books have the best sales? Are not the authors who are most heartily received by the reading public those who labor conscientiously, and who give evidence that they are giving of their best? After all I do not think that the public is so *blasé* as Mr. Swift suggests.

For my own part, I am inclined to think that if a man has the root of the matter in him, the conditions were never as favorable to the best work as they are to-day.

BY JANE BARLOW

Having read hardly half a dozen of the novels published within the last half dozen years, I am very ill-qualified to criticise Mr. Swift's interesting article, which, I have no doubt, describes clearly and accurately the present state of English fiction. About some of the conclusions that he draws from it I have some doubts. He apparently assumes that the enormous production of inartistic pot-boiler novels must vastly diminish the success of literary work; that if the former ceased to exist, the latter would enjoy the reversion of all their readers. This alternative is surely not inevitable. An extremely large proportion of the public whose delight is in, say the *Family Herald*, would, failing that, read nothing whatever, as its habit was a few generations back, when it had a far smaller choice of

other pastimes. Whether it would be the better for such abstinence is, of course, a different question; but literature certainly would not profit thereby.

Nobody will dissent from Mr. Swift's opinion as to the imbecility of "competitions" in guessing which novels have been most extensively advertised. But he seems to overrate their importance. It never occurred to me that they had any connection with literature more intimate than those other universal "competitions," which somehow enable newspaper columns of happy people to win half-crown prizes by buying packets of tea. At most, they are merely one small additional advertisement.

As for "The Decay of the Novel," is it not to be accounted for by a single simple and sufficient reason? There are at present no great novelists. Such a dearth is not by any means unprecedented in various departments and at various periods of our literature. For instance, we have just now no great essayist, and only one great poet. Again, in the dozen years following the death of Sir Walter Scott, who could have pointed to any master of fiction? It is, indeed, in the power of any sufficiently substantial capitalist to persuade some ninety per cent. of the reading public that such a one has arisen, precisely as he could impress it with the virtues of a new soap or drug. In fact, in their paragraphic, anecdotal form the puff medical and the puff literary are so indistinguishable that a periodical of the highest culture might, without incongruity, be devoted to the joint interests of a proprietary pill and a proprietary author. The modern developments of advertising may be a newer condition than a scarcity of great imaginative writers, and it is one which will probably be more permanent, though its outward shape may change. If, for example, the scorn of the cultured few for popularity, as evidenced by mammoth sales, should descend, like other fashions, to the numerous class beneath, we might see our familiar announcements of "Three large editions exhausted before going to press," superseded by alluring assurances that

only two copies had been sold twelve months after publication. But the most enterprising of advertisers avail not to call back him who left half-told the story of Cambuscan bold, or her who told perfectly the story of delight-

ful Emma; and as little can they hasten or delay the advent of the genius which destiny may even now be guiding hither, to walk worthily in the ways of Dickens and Thackeray and George Eliot.

Scenery versus Human Nature

By CAROLYN SHIPMAN

BY entitling his last novel "The River," * Mr. Phillpotts in a measure disarms adverse criticism of his art. A book with such a name would appear to justify long descriptions of scenery seemingly irrelevant, and placed very much in the foreground if the author so willed it. In a novel of pastoral life, in which emotions are idyllic and the course of events is smooth-flowing, such descriptions might be appropriate, even though they bore a more emphatic relation to the story than the undercurrent in the refrain *Toll slowly* in "The Rhyme of the Duchess May."

But "The River" is not a pastoral novel. It is a novel of mighty human passions,—love, hate, revenge, jealousy, sublime generosity, in relation to which scenery should be a background and not an accompaniment. It is as though a stage-manager, lacking sense of proportion and perspective, should pull into the foreground the prospect of a distant-lying landscape, and give it as much prominence as the characters to whom it should be but background.

There is no doubt of the beauty of Mr. Phillpotts's descriptions, but he loves them too well. The temptation to continue writing what is effective in his books must certainly be strong, but the willingness to yield shows an immaturity which, it is to be hoped, will disappear when the author realizes that the result is not true art. In fact, it is as bad art as the grand opera, in which beautiful music is generally marred by poor acting, and good actors are

obliged to express themselves by the unnatural method of song.

Mr. Phillpotts makes the fundamental mistake of supposing that nature-lovers are also psychologists. Never was greater error. True Wordsworthians and Thoreau-lovers care not for tales of the street; human motives and intricate psychological problems are as nothing to them compared with the meanest flower that blows and the light that never was on land or sea. They chafe against city boundaries and conventions. To the psychologist, on the other hand, nature is a background, important surely, but only as form and color, without definite scientific value. The psychologist views nature from the æsthetic point of view, and never as an object of description or analysis. Man is his study, the object of his science.

Mr. Phillpotts would have nature and man, the objective and the subjective, walk hand in hand in his novel, therefore he fails artistically. We are obliged to look at the river Dart through his eyes, not through those of his characters, and that sometimes at the most critical points in the story, when we would rush on to the scene of some vital action, but are delayed by the author, who bids us pause to observe the landscape. It is safe to say that students of human nature, after having read the first two sentences in the first chapter of this book, will skim lightly over the pages until a human figure appears on page 5! Then the real reading will begin.

And what a master-hand is here! No puppets pulled by wires are these, but

* "The River." By Eden Phillpotts. Frederick A. Stokes Co. \$1.50.

living creatures, throbbing with strong, primitive emotions that carry them on inevitably with no intervention from the author. They act as they must act, in accordance with their natures.

There are four principals: Nicholas Edgcombe, the "red man," a rabbit-warrener; Hannah Bradridge, daughter of the proprietress of the "Ring o' Bells"; Timothy Oldreive, a gentleman-farmer and a scamp; and Mary Merle, a widow-farmer's daughter.

Nicholas is a God-fearing man much versed in Bible lore, a generous child of nature to whom love comes with overpowering might when he first sees Hannah Bradridge. The guilelessness of his nature is shown in the following conversation with Hannah:

"You might almost have been a carpenter, so clever you are," she said one day.

"An' dearly I'd have liked the job," he answered; "but it seemed natural I should follow faither, as was a game keeper. Yet carpentering be the most holy trade as a boy could well be put to, for Christ was one. 'T was at a common bench He got His thoughts while He cut an' drove an' measured and set His saw through sweet, good-natured wood, just as I be doing now. It seem the very shavings must have curled into the words of His Faither, for He was sucking in the message all them young years of His life, same as the earth sucks up the rain from heaven."

And Hannah,

"There's plenty of faults waiting to be found," she said. "I'm not all of a piece like you slow-fashioned men be—I mean in my mind. I like small things. Bible news is rather old. I want

yesterday's as well: who be dead, where the last child was born, who be tokened, who've quarrelled, the price of corn, an' such-like. You don't 'pear to take account of all that. If I tell scandals, you yawn till I see every big tooth in your mouth. But though I don't yawn, I get tired too sometimes of the prophets an' apostles and so on. I'll own to you that I took more delight in them baby foxes you showed me last week than in all the Testament heroes put together. There's a terrible bit of news for 'e."

Nicholas loved Hannah, Hannah loved both Nicholas and Timothy; Timothy, a libertine, wished to outwit Nicholas, whom he hated, by winning Hannah; and Mary loved Nicholas, unknown to him.

This is the tragedy of the situation. The comedy is supplied by the group of men that frequented Betty Bradridge's "Ring o' Bells," in particular by Merryweather Chugg, the water-bailiff, a Wesleyan; by Mark Trout, Betty's fat stable-man, the father of eleven children and the butt of the neighborhood on account of his philoprogenitive disposition; and by Sorrow Scobhull, a stone-breaker with one idea, that Dart would sometime claim him as her next victim, his father having been drowned on the night of his birth, and he "having come untimely to a frantic mother."

The final solution of the problem is natural, even though it follows the logic of a man's mistaken idea of chivalry, and we leave the story with a short paragraph of nature description of exceeding beauty and artistic restraint.



Real Conversations

RECORDED BY WILLIAM ARCHER

Conversation X.—With Mrs. Mary St. Leger Harrison ("Lucas Malet")

SCENE: *Mrs. Harrison's library, in South Kensington.* TIME: *A Winter afternoon.*

Mrs. Harrison. So you take seriously the idea that the stories are all told, and that fiction will soon be an extinct art, like the profile-cutting of our grandmothers?

W. A. I don't take it very seriously—I let my mind play with it.

Mrs. Harrison. As a pleasing possibility?

W. A. Not as an altogether appalling one.

Mrs. Harrison. Do tell me—what are the symptoms of this approaching extinction of the novel? It was Jules Verne, was it not, who started the idea?

W. A. Who was the last to re-start it, rather.

Mrs. Harrison. Well, it seems to me exactly what one might expect from that quarter. It is like forecasting the end of the world through a swish from a comet's tail. The thing is possible, no doubt; but serious astronomers see nothing to point to its imminent probability. We have plenty of evidence that the telling of stories and that the stories told are a constant quantity in human history. Therefore, as there is nothing new under the sun, and as the only sound way of reasoning is to reason from the known to the unknown, I imagine story-telling will remain a constant quantity. Man will want what man has wanted. And I am quite sure that many a woman before the Sultana Scheherazade has saved her neck by her talent for romancing.

W. A. In short, you define man as a lying animal, and think he—and she—will go on telling agreeable lies, at six shillings a tarradiddle, to the end of the chapter? Well, I am inclined to admit that fiction, considered as the art of lying, may probably count on a

long lease of life. It is the fiction which aims at telling the truth that seems to me of doubtful longevity. The novel is clearly the best of all mechanisms for saying the thing that is not; but may it not come to be thought rather a clumsy device for portraying the thing that is?

Mrs. Harrison. You mean that romance is immortal, but that realism will soon have worked itself out?

W. A. Say, rather, that realism tends to become merged in science, that people may one day prefer to take their psychology and sociology "neat," so to speak, with no hot water and sugar of sentimental or sensational narrative to help it down.

Mrs. Harrison. Now, if I wanted to prophesy—I don't, but you have lured me on—I should take exactly the opposite line from yours. I should suggest that the romances had all been told—that people who want picturesque adventure and reconstructions of bygone times would find all they can possibly require in Scott and Dumas and Stevenson and the rest—in "The Cloister and the Hearth," and "Esmond," and "A Tale of Two Cities"

—
W. A. May I add "Hypatia" and "Westward Ho"?

Mrs. Harrison. — while every generation, every great community, every new phase of political and economic development, will want its Balzac, its Flaubert, its Zola, its Meredith, and Hardy—if only it can find them.

W. A. You don't think, then, that each generation will want to create its own Eldorados, and Ruritania, and Castles East of the Sun and West of the Moon?

Mrs. Harrison. Oh, yes, they will,

I daresay; and no doubt the march of science will have its camp-followers, like Jules Verne, to fable about airships and submarines and what not. But I doubt whether these things will hold the literary rank in future that they have held in the past. We are talking—are we not?—of literature as it is understood by educated, intelligent people, not of the mere stacks of “reading matter” that are put on the market to supply the day’s demand, just as so many tons of meat are delivered every morning at Smithfield. I can’t help thinking that the intelligent public of the coming time will go to the past for its romances of adventure and archæology, and will demand of contemporary men of genius studies, interpretations, and criticisms of contemporary life.

W. A. No doubt, no doubt: the question is whether these studies, interpretations, and criticisms will take the form of what we now understand as fiction.

Mrs. Harrison. The form—the formula—will of course change. Dickens does n’t write like Fielding, Hardy does n’t write like Dickens, and the Hardy of the next generation will not write like our Hardy,—that is obvious. But that he will write fiction in one form or another, and not sociological treatises or psychological monographs, I don’t for an instant doubt. You surely do not suppose, Mr. Archer, that science can ever supplant art with the multitude, any more than it can supplant religion, of which art is merely another expression? The eye can see things that the microscope misses, and the films of the brain are still more sensitive than those of the camera.

W. A. Aristotle says, somewhere or other, that poetry is more philosophical than history; in the same way you would have me think that fiction is truer than science.

Mrs. Harrison. It can place some aspects of truth in a stronger, more convincing light; and it can bring truth home not only to the intellect, as science can, but—which is much more important—to the heart as well.

W. A. What do you mean by truth

in this context? Moral truth or objective truth, so to speak? The truth of the fable or the truth of the photograph?

Mrs. Harrison. Surely you don’t put that question seriously?

W. A. I admit I was beguiled by alliteration into a misleading image. Of course we are not speaking of unselective mechanical truth, like that of photography. Let me correct the illustration and ask whether the truth that, according to you, fiction brings home to the sympathies is truth of the lesson or truth of the picture?

Mrs. Harrison. But again I say, how can you ask? Is not the one entirely dependent on the other? How can the lesson be true if the picture be untrue? And, indeed, what have we, as artists, to do with the lesson? Let us make the picture true, and the lesson will take care of itself. A novel should be simply an enlargement of the reader’s experience, a focussing of life as a whole, subject to certain conditions of time and place. It should be a “holding of the mirror up to nature”—precisely that! And the profit the reader should desire from it should not merely be the instinctive, the half-unconscious profit all reasonable persons desire from their experiences, but the philosophic profit we gain whenever we see any life as a whole—that is, in a sane and true relation to all life. But this is just where the difficulty of the English novelist comes in. Puritanism is so stupidly afraid of the lessons of life as a whole, and so resolute never to learn them, that it insists on our wearing, or pretending to wear, blinkers, so as to see nothing that is inconsistent with its preconceived moral scheme. Think of the weakness, the unphilosophic quality of Puritanism, compared with Catholicism, as a basis or background for art! And then the eventual outcome of Puritanism is of necessity rationalism; and there we have the real enemy! Suppose a novelist with the genius of Balzac were to appear on the scene tomorrow—what sort of a Balzac would he be after adapting himself to the standards of the British publisher, the British reviewer, and the British public?

W. A. It would be a hard case, no doubt; but let us be just to Puritanism and admit—

Mrs. Harrison. Surely you do not deny that the Puritan is inimical to art?

W. A. Theoretically, I don't; but so far as fiction is concerned (the stage is another matter) I doubt his power, in these latter days, to do very much harm. However, that is not what I was going to say. The point I had in mind was this: if Puritanism places certain external hindrances in the English novelist's way, is there not ample compensation in the magnificent artistic material it affords him? What tragedies are so profound as those that, directly or indirectly, arise out of Puritanism,—personal tragedies, family tragedies, even, as we have seen, political tragedies? It seems to me that, whatever the limitations of our English fiction, there is an intensity in the soul-struggles it presents which one misses in even the best French fiction.

Mrs. Harrison. That is because the Englishman is much more certain that he *has* a soul.

W. A. Precisely—and what a tragic conviction! Don't we see, in Hamlet's great soliloquy, how it is not till he reminds himself of his soul that he feels himself truly in the grip of destiny? And then, what is the correlative of "soul"? Why, "sin"! What an infinitely stronger word than "*péché*"! The connotation is wholly different—just as "remorse" is a wholly different thing from "*des remords*." If I may take an example which ought to come home to you, what French novelist could write of "The Wages of Sin"? He would have to say, or at any rate to mean, nothing more tragic than "The Consequences of Error."

Mrs. Harrison. But what can be more tragic than that? And what else do you and I mean when we say, "The Wages of Sin"?

W. A. Pardon me! You and I, by a conscious effort, may water down "The Wages of Sin" into "The Consequences of Error"; but the color of the thought is washed out in the process. Would "The Consequences of Error" have inspired you with the

novel we know? Is it not precisely the ingrained, ineradicable Puritanism lurking in James Colthurst, as in every normal Englishman, that makes him such a tragic figure? And is it not the Puritanism in the blood of your readers—whatever may be their conduct or their convictions—that enables them to sympathize with his agonies?

Mrs. Harrison. All this amounts to saying—does it not?—that Puritanism allows us to be more melodramatic in our morality than our neighbors are. We study our ethical problems, not in plain, sane daylight, but in the glare of the flames of Gehenna. If you alleged this as an accusation I am not sure that I could deny it; but I understand you to rank the glare of the flames as the chief of our advantages.

W. A. I can't quite accept your metaphor. I think the Puritan conception of sin is not melodramatic, but tragic—all the more so if we hold it to be morbid and erroneous. Suppose we change the metaphor and say of the English novelist, not that he can burn red fire, but that he can raise ghosts to haunt his heroes such as are not dreamt of in the Frenchman's philosophy. And are not ghosts part of the classic apparatus of tragedy? When the ghosts are all laid, when man shall have got into moral harmony with nature, then indeed will fiction be in a parlous case.

Mrs. Harrison. Ah, well, if it survives till then it will last my time, and a little over. All you have said, it seems to me, amounts simply to this, that Calvinism supplies us with darker colors for our palette than any religion which allows us to find, as Tartuffe says, "*avec le ciel des accommodements*." Perhaps that is so; but how small a set-off against the warping and stunting influence of Puritanism upon art. Do you think that Balzac, had he been offered the choice, would have exchanged his magnificent breadth of outlook and freedom of utterance for the chance of studying a particular variety of subjective self-torture?

W. A. I believe I might find an answer even to that; but the fact is, in trying to make a case for Puritanism I

am appearing in a new and entirely unrehearsed character—a good deal to my own surprise. Does it ever happen to you, in a dream, to find yourself on the stage of a theatre, with the curtain just going up, and suddenly to realize that you don't know a word of your part?

Mrs. Harrison. I don't think my waking mind runs so much on the theatre as to render me liable to such nightmares.

W. A. Dear me! I thought all novelists dreamed of nothing but the stage.

Mrs. Harrison. Not I, I am afraid.

W. A. Yet, if you will allow me to say so, in one at least of your books you have all the materials for a very fine play.

Mrs. Harrison. In which? You are not going to tell me that there is a play in "Sir Richard Calmady"! I have had an application from America for the right to dramatize the book; but of course I regarded it as a physical impossibility. Whom could they get to play the leading part? A "freak" from Barnum's show?

W. A. No, I was not thinking of "Sir Richard Calmady." It was "The Carissima" I had in mind.

Mrs. Harrison. Ah, I confess I have thought that a play might be made of that story, and have even attempted it. But when you say there is "all the material" for a play in it, you understate the case. There is so very much more than the material for a play in it; and the parts that would lend themselves to treatment on the stage would certainly not be the best parts.

W. A. I expressed myself badly in saying there was the "material" for a play in it. I should rather have said that it contains the germ, the seed, the root-idea, of a very fine play. It would be a mistake to attempt simply to hew and chisel a play out of the book as it stands, as a statue is hewn out of a block of marble. You would have, as it were, to replant the idea in your mind and let it grow afresh in dramatic form. Neither the characters nor the incidents would be quite the same. You would have to sacrifice a good deal

of subtlety; but on the other hand you could attain some not only strong but really subtle effects of a different order.

Mrs. Harrison. But surely I am the very last person that could be expected to do all this. If the book has any merit at all, the characters must be real, at any rate to me; their doings cannot be arbitrary, but must spring from what seems, to me at least, an inward necessity. How, then, should I be able to "hatch them over again and hatch them different?"

W. A. Well, I am myself no enthusiast for the dramatized novel. I doubt whether it can ever be a really true work of art. But have you never thought of casting a theme from the outset in dramatic instead of narrative form?

Mrs. Harrison. Why should I set myself to master a new art which has all sorts of disadvantages and disabilities from which my own art is free?

W. A. But which offers all the more splendid triumphs when these disadvantages and disabilities are overcome.

Mrs. Harrison. Material "triumphs," do you mean? "Runs" and royalties?

W. A. These, too; but I was thinking chiefly of the artistic triumph of conquering difficulties and extracting from them the elements of new strength and new beauty.

Mrs. Harrison. And this you think the dramatist can do?

W. A. I am sure of it—just as I am sure that the sculptor, in virtue of the very hardness and recalcitrancy of his material, can attain a certain very noble order of effects denied to the painter.

Mrs. Harrison. Yes—I can understand the fascination of the marble for the sculptor, and I can understand also that the dramatist may be fascinated by the intrinsic, inseparable difficulties of the dramatic form—the difficulties arising, like those of the sculptor, from the very nature of the medium he works in. But then there are so many extrinsic fortuitous difficulties and annoyances besetting the dramatist's calling,—difficulties that are not really artistic at all—that cannot be overcome

by the exercise but rather by the sacrifice of art. For one thing, before a play can really live, the playwright must submit to the collaboration of a whole host of people—the actor-manager and other actors, the stage-manager, the scene-painter, and so forth. His work is subjected to all manner of modifications and distortions that have no artistic or logical necessity, but are arbitrary concessions to the idiosyncrasy—and often to the sheer blind prejudice—either of the interpreters or of the so-called “great public.” And even if this collaboration were more rational than it generally is, I confess I shrink from any sort of collaboration whatever, any intrusion between me and my audience. I am by nature and habit “the cat that walked by himself” of Kipling’s story—a splendid piece of work, by the way.

W. A. What you say about the worries and annoyances that beset the playwright’s path is only too true. I always feel myself a bit of a Mephistopheles when I try to beguile an author into exchanging the sweet seclusion of his study for the Witches’ Sabbath of stageland. I don’t know whether you observe any of the red fire we were speaking of playing about me just now. Yet if I had any creative talent whatever I should certainly be the dupe of my own blandishments. I would rather write one great play than a whole Mudie van-load of successful novels. And I don’t think it is the limelight and glitter of the stage that allures me—nor even the glamour of “ten per cent. on the gross,”—but simply the difficulty of compressing the greatest possible amount of character and emotion into the “two crowded hours of glorious life” allotted to the dramatist.

Mrs. Harrison. It may be a confession of epicureanism, but the tabloid ideal of art does not appeal to me.

W. A. Yet I am sure you feel the attraction of difficulty, else you would never have written “Sir Richard Calmady.” It interested me to notice, the other day, that when you wrote “The Wages of Sin,”—how long ago was that?

Mrs. Harrison. Thirteen years.

W. A. You evidently already had the story of “Sir Richard Calmady” complete in your mind, even down to the names of the characters and the social setting.

Mrs. Harrison. Oh, yes, that is true—poor Dickie Calmady has haunted me for years—I was only waiting for courage to deal with the theme.

W. A. It is the very difficulties of the theme that make me feel that you ought to be attracted by the similar difficulties of drama. Again and again in reading the book, as I saw a particular scene looming ahead, I said to myself, “How *can* this situation be successfully handled?” and again and again you come out of it triumphant.

Mrs. Harrison. But are you right in talking of the “similar difficulties of the drama”? Are they not essentially dissimilar? The characteristic difficulties of the drama, I imagine, are mainly mechanical—or shall we say technical?—whereas the difficulties in dealing with “Sir Richard Calmady” were not so much technical as psychological. At any rate, as I said before, the art of extreme compression does not appeal to me. I want more space rather than less. I would gladly write a novel in ten volumes, like “Sir Charles Grandison,” if the public would buy it. And the public *would* buy it fast enough if a man of genius arose to write it. I don’t believe it is the hurry of life that has begotten the modern episode-novel, but the novelist’s lack of power to handle a large theme.

W. A. Do you think, then, that we shall abandon the episode-novel, and come back to the long and leisurely biography-novel, like “Pendennis” or “David Copperfield”?

Mrs. Harrison. You are determined to make me prophesy, but I won’t be betrayed into it. All I know is that when I read a modern novel I am struck, nine times out of ten, by the excellence of the first conception and the poverty of the working out. They are like rapid sketches for subsequent elaboration rather than completed portraits. Modern writers are for the most part impressionists because they

have not patience, or perhaps power, to be anything else.

W. A. You, I know, work slowly; to judge, at any rate, by the intervals between your books.

Mrs. Harrison. I find that a book, to be really developed, really a work of art, must be written three times over, in three different forms. First there is of course the sketch—

W. A. What does that imply, precisely? Do you mean a mere skeleton, a scenario?

Mrs. Harrison. Oh, no, a great deal more than that: a tolerably full outline of the great scenes and of the characters. Then comes a time of misery and confusion, when you are extending and filling in the sketch—completing the book in the rough. And then, at last, you have your reward in the exquisite pleasure of writing the final form.

W. A. And is the third form longer or shorter than the second?

Mrs. Harrison. As a rule, considerably shorter. You, of course, know a great deal more about your characters than you ultimately find it necessary to tell your readers.

W. A. I seem to remember that some critics, in writing of "Sir Richard Calmady," quarrelled with the elaborateness, or rather the frequency, of your descriptions of nature.

Mrs. Harrison. I know of one, at any rate, who did so: who accused me of always "setting a scene" for every emotional crisis, and accompanying every new phase of emotion with a new atmospheric effect. Well, I do not say this critic was wholly wrong; but my answer is simply that I cannot help it. Personally, I am always acutely conscious of my surroundings, and I cannot help transferring this consciousness to my characters. I suppose I never spent five minutes in a room without being able, at any reasonable interval of time, to draw a plan of that room and describe to you almost every object in it.

W. A. Even if all the time you have been in the room your mind has been more or less intensely preoccupied with other things than the mere still-life picture?

Mrs. Harrison. My mind would probably register the still-life picture all the more minutely and vividly if it were the scene, say, of some dramatic interview or emotional experience. This habit of observation is a great source of pleasure to me, but often, of course, a great discomfort as well. I do not consciously look, but I cannot help seeing. I attribute it to the early training given me by my father. In all our walks with him he was always teaching us how to use our eyes.

W. A. I sincerely envy you. I am one of those people who are born with their eyes turned inwards. I can say, like Charles Lamb, that if one fine morning the sun rose in the west, while all the world was gasping with astonishment I should go about my business unperturbed, wondering only what other people saw to wonder at.

Mrs. Harrison. Does not that help to account, perhaps, for your partiality for the stage? If you are not very sensitive to environment and atmosphere, you are naturally not much troubled by the lack of atmosphere—I don't mean lack of ventilation, though that, too, is bad enough—which some of us find so distressing in the theatre.

W. A. It is true that you cannot employ what Ruskin called the "pathetic fallacy" on the stage, or only within narrow limits. The sympathy of nature would seem too cheap and mechanical if we knew that it was worked by the electrician at the switch-board. But does not this criticism react upon what is in reality the equally mechanical use of the same device in fiction?

Mrs. Harrison. I am afraid I don't agree. It is a matter of daily experience that our moods are either in harmony or out of harmony with nature. Why, then, should the novelist scruple to reproduce that daily experience?

W. A. That sounds reasonable, certainly. Yet the nature-descriptions of some novelists always remind me of Calverley's

I must tell you again it was glorious weather—
Rhymes are so scarce in this world of ours.

It seems as though their passion for

nature was begotten of their poverty, not of rhymes but of ideals.

Mrs. Harrison. You are as indifferent as Dr. Johnson to the "sweet influences" of nature, or affect to be so—I don't know which. Can you imagine what Hawthorne would have been—that great master of psychological romance—without his keen and unflagging consciousness of the natural environment of his creations? He, surely, suffered from no penury of ideas. Or, to take an instance nearer home, think of Thomas Hardy! Is not his exquisite eye for nature an integral part of his genius? It is more than an "eye" for nature—it is an instinctive, intimate sympathy like that of some sylvan creature of the old mythology. When he draws his fine, soft, silver-point Wessex landscapes, does he seem to you to be merely "setting the scene" for this or that situation? Or, conversely, can you conceive the Blackmore Vale of "Tess" or the Egdon Heath of "The Return of the Native" reproduced in canvas and size, with "property" heather, and meadows of electric-green matting? No, no: give me the freedom of the novel, for choice!

W. A. Both the men you mention are in my eyes not so much novelists as poets—great poets—and their treatment of nature is in nothing more admirable than in its discretion.

Mrs. Harrison. I do not admit the force of the distinction you draw. Surely all serious fiction is of the nature of poetry, and what is admirable in Hawthorne and Hardy ought to be at any rate permissible in others, always assuming that they can do it reasonably well.

W. A. I think I meant, as regards Hardy, that he has, almost literally, created his own domain; that whereas in the case of most novelists we can readily take for granted the common earth on which their people move, Hardy's characters, on the other hand, belong in a peculiar sense to the peculiar soil from which they seem to have sprung. We could not conceive his fauna apart from his flora. The "Jungle Book" presupposes the jungle.

Mrs. Harrison. If you only mean that Hardy is intensely local and depends for his effects on an ever-present sense of locality, I quite agree; but I wholly disagree if you mean that Hardy's Wessex is "created" in the sense of fabricated—that his peasants, as shallow critics are fond of declaring, are unreal.

W. A. Oh, no; that was not what I meant.

Mrs. Harrison. Surely not. I, having lived the greater part of my life in the country, know how absolutely true Hardy is. If you suppose that the country laborer leads a stupid and unemotional existence, it is merely because you have never been very closely in touch with him. He is cautious and suspicious. He has, moreover, a certain half-pitying contempt for you, because you have got your knowledge of things in general from books instead of at first hand from nature and practical experience. He is not going to give himself away. But his inner life is intense, his speculations daring, his sense of humor generally keen. Very much of all this Hardy has succeeded in putting on paper. He has drawn the English peasant from the inside as in my opinion no other English novelist has. We of the educated classes are pleased to suppose that we are the favored of the gods, and that drama, let alone wisdom, begins and ends with ourselves. In point of fact the middle-class is the dull, the undramatic class, because it has lost its primitive instincts. The upper and the laboring classes in England are really the raw material of the dramatist, because they have retained a wholesome relation to nature, an admirable possibility of savagery. It is rather on our own social level that "le soir tous les chats sont gris." What some persons scoff at as melodrama in Dickens, for instance, is very often simple truth. In the laboring classes, both of town and country, as any one can see who reads the police reports and assize news, sentimentality and brutality go amazingly hand in hand. There are greater heroisms and blacker vices among the poor than among per-

sons of moderate income and good education. The sheep and the goats are more clearly marked off from each other. There is far more romance in Rotherhithe than in West Kensington.

W. A. When you say that, what do you mean by "romance"?

Mrs. Harrison. Why, life at its greatest fulness—at its highest emotional intensity.

W. A. Ah! that, now, is what I mean by drama—

Mrs. Harrison. Oh, dear, oh, dear! are we not getting back to the theatre?

W. A. No, no: forgive me. I see my Mephistophelean wiles are lost upon you, and I think it is time that I should retire discomfited.

Mrs. Harrison. When you show me an ideal theatre—

W. A. — with complete meteorological machinery and aerial perspectives at discretion—

Mrs. Harrison. — I may think about yielding to that fascination of difficulty which you dwell on so eloquently. In the meantime—*au revoir* rather, good-bye!



Mary Hartwell Catherwood

By W. E. SIMONDS

IN the recent popular development of historical romance, Mrs. Mary Hartwell Catherwood was something of a pioneer, for the so-called realistic school was enjoying its vogue at the very time that Mrs. Catherwood's career as a novelist began. Readers of the *Century Magazine* were made acquainted with the power and charm of a writer new to most of them when "The Romance of Dollard" began to appear in that periodical in November, 1888, and before its chapters were ended the wider circle of story-lovers the country over were ready to aver that never had the romance of history been presented by a more sympathetic or more careful delineator. It is to Mrs. Catherwood's intimate acquaintance with the history and traditions dealing with the conquest of the wilderness and the beginnings of civilization in the region of the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, and in the valleys of the Mississippi and the Illinois, combined with an enthusiastic admiration for the heroes and heroines of those early and somewhat unfamiliar times, that we owe this series of entertaining historical narratives—the finest literary product, as yet, of that comparatively young but important section of our

country, the Middle West. The brilliant historical studies of Francis Parkman first awakened the interest of Mrs. Catherwood in this richly romantic field and inspired her first successful effort.

Incidental to the story are numerous scenes that compel the intensest interest, and nowhere does the narrative drop from its tone of epic dignity to the lower level of vulgar melodrama.

In the "Lady of the Fort St. John" the scene changes to the Bay of Fundy and the misty beaches of Arcadia, in the year 1645. Marie de la Tour is the lady of the fort, and in the absence of her Huguenot husband she valiantly defends his stronghold against D'Aulnay de Charmisay—like De la Tour himself, the liege servant of Louis XIII. Mrs. Catherwood's fertile imagination and suggestive power in portraiture are well exemplified in this stirring romance. It would be difficult to find in recent fiction a more spirited battle narrative than that which gives the climax to this account of siege and assault, of base treachery and rare devotion, with its pleasant intermingling of romantic attachment and cavalier wooing. The creation of La Rossignol, the sylph-like dwarf, floating mysteriously in and out inseparable from

her great white swan, is a bit of poetry uncommon in historical romance. The loyal widow Bronck, who with uncanny fascination gazes at stated intervals upon the mummied hand of her departed lord,—according to instructions given before his death,—and her wooing by the handsome Dutchman Van Corlaer, contribute an enlivening element. Edelwald, minstrel, soldier, and lover, is the true hero of the romance.

In two excellent short stories, "The Mill at Petit Cap" and "Wolfe's Cove," another phase of early American history is touched—the struggle for supremacy between French and English. The latter story includes a vivid picture of the taking of Quebec. Thus out of the conflicts between civilization and savagery, the wars between the races, the jealousies and rivalries of the great feudal lords in the northern provinces, Mrs. Catherwood has known how to construct the past. The life of the hunter and the *voyageur*, of the gentle *habitant*, the half-breed, the *grand seigneur*: she understands it all. She is at home among the Abenakis, the Chippewas, the Pottawatomies, in the lodges of the Hurons, and with the flying canoes of the Iroquois. Frontenac, Tonty, La Salle, Bigot, Montcalm, Wolfe, figure in her pages. Old-time tales of Mackinac Island and the upper Lake region have been gathered in one of her volumes. The singular career of the Mormon leader, King Strang, in his domain on Beaver Island is chronicled here.

Old Kaskaskia is a somewhat confused portrayal of the political quarrels and personal encounters of early days in the principal settlement of the Mississippi valley, where a mingling of the races has already taken place.

But Mrs. Catherwood's work has not been entirely with material drawn from the remote past. The "Spirit of an Illinois Town" is a brightly realistic picture of the hustling ways and crude experiences likely to be met with in a typical prairie town that is, or was, in the process of being "boomed." The board sidewalks lined with resin-weed strung with lumps of translucent gum,

scattered houses that alternate with vacant lots, skeleton factories, a railway junction on the open prairie, bustling land-agents, two young editors bound to "push" the town—raw beginnings of possible great things: these are in marked contrast to the idealizations of the professed romanticist, but genuine and interesting in their turn. The "Spirit" is Kate Keene, daughter of a dissipated, broken-down newspaper man, once an actor.

The range of Mrs. Catherwood's artistic power is not measured entirely by the stories already mentioned. A fascinating idealization of the history of Jeanne d'Arc is a work carefully composed in the tenderest sympathy with her subject. The dialogue between Bertrand and D'Aulon concerning the death of the martyred maid is one of the subtlest and tenderest creations in romantic fiction.

The great success of Mrs. Catherwood's latest and most ambitious work, "Lazarre," is so recent as to make much comment upon that novel superfluous here. It is generally known that the material from which that story was written had long been in the author's mind and that it took intense hold upon her imagination. The legendary history of Eleazer Williams, the mysterious youth of unknown origin, discovered among the Mohawk Indians upon the shores of Lake George, treated by them with unusual distinction, and plausibly identified with the lost Dauphin of France, son of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette—what a subject for historical romance in the hands of a skilled American novelist familiar with all the picturesque details of manners and life in the new world and the old in that revolutionary age! And the rich promise of this material is realized in the book.

"Lazarre" is a fascinating story, and ranks among the very best of the historical novels so numerous of late. The background of pioneer civilization in the midst of which the hero suddenly awakens to the consciousness of identity, permits a striking contrast to the brilliant setting of the dramatic scenes in France under the Empire, whither

Lazarre is sent upon his hazardous quest. The action of the story is furthered by a plot of intrigue and cunning, rather than one of sword-slashing and promiscuous blood-letting—a distinct relief after the superfluity of such excitements in recent fiction. In the glimpses of historical characters—General Jackson, Louis Philippe, Marie Thérèse, Louis XVIII., Bonaparte—Mrs. Catherwood does not suffer by comparison with her fellow-novelists. But the interest of the story centres after all in the love-romance of Lazarre and Eagle de Ferrier, and here the author is at her best. The climax of that romance in the forest cabin at Green Bay, in what was then the Illinois territory, is the true end of the quest. Lazarre finds his kingdom in a woman's loyal heart.

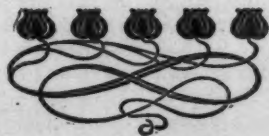
Several volumes of children's stories are to be credited to Mrs. Catherwood's versatile pen. Her short stories, too, are of notable excellence. The collection entitled "The Queen of the Swamp, and Other Plain Americans," is full of good things.


To Mrs. Catherwood the reader's debt is no slight one. Her books belong to that happy and not over-abundant list that furnish a genuine satisfaction in the reading. They are bright and cheery; nothing morbid finds a place in them. Wholesome, entertaining, instructive, they are good stories too; and dulness is an unknown quantity in Mrs. Catherwood's work. Some few personal facts will be interesting to her admirers who may possibly be unacquainted with her history.

Mary Hartwell was an Ohio girl by birth. She was born in Luray, a little town in Licking County, in the southern part of the State, and received her education in a girls' school at Granville, where she was graduated in 1868. Her


home since the school-days ended has been in Indiana and Illinois. A busy school-teacher for a time in Danville, Illinois, she found occasional opportunity to indulge her taste and talent for literary work; and many of her short stories were written at this period. In 1887 Mary Hartwell was married to Mr. James Steele Catherwood, and for several years thereafter her home was in Indianapolis. Then the Catherwoods removed to Hoopston, Illinois; but for the past three years Chicago has been their permanent home. Mrs. Catherwood mingled freely in society, where her personality as well as her genius was heartily admired. She took life seriously, but had the grace to take it sweetly. She was rigidly just in her attitude toward history and true to her convictions on the subject of right and wrong.

It is not only because of this woman's intimate knowledge of the historic time which oftenest inspires her narrative that she was the successful and popular novelist and story-teller that she became, but because along with her information she had the genuine knack of the story-teller and knew how to make the material at hand alive with human interest and present-day sympathy. She plainly understood human nature, and was able by her imaginative power to interpret the experiences and passions of the seventeenth century in terms that fascinate the reader in the twentieth. Doubtless, also, she did but justice to the heroes and heroines who in various ranks from peasant to chevalier played their individual parts in the drama of exploration and of settlement, lived their lives of mingled comedy and tragedy, and who, but for such sympathetic interpretation, would remain mere shadowy names unfamiliar except to students of history.





Woodrow Wilson's "History of the American People"



By GEORGE LOUIS BEER

THE introduction of the critical spirit in historical research was a prominent phase of the development of thought in the nineteenth century. It was part of the general movement of intellectual scepticism, which would not accept of the truth of any statement without first carefully testing its accuracy. In historical work this spirit demanded that all the sources of knowledge be examined. *Ne quid veri non audeat historia* came to be the cardinal principle on which every scholarly historian worked. So rigidly was this principle insisted upon that only recently a French historian, Seignobos, asserted that it was impossible to write a scientific history of the nineteenth century, because no individual, during the normal span of life, could personally examine the enormous mass of available material. This prevailing view led inevitably to great specialization in historical research; investigation was confined to necessarily narrow limits. It brought about also, in some instances, a false perspective, one in which the method came to appear as an end, not simply as a means. A great mass of purely antiquarian matter was produced; few had the courage to oppose the current of scientific thought and to produce large synthetic works, resting on the labors of specialists. The horizon was narrowed, broad views were lost sight of. Though the unity of history was insisted upon, there were few books the reading of which made this fundamental truth self-evident. We had accumulated, as Lamprecht said, "*Eine tote Masse in sich wohlzubereiteten Stoffes.*"

In recent years there set in against this attitude a marked reaction, one sign of which were those co-operative histories

in which specialists joined forces to produce works of broader scope. Such are Traill's "Social England," Lavisse's "France," Helmolt's "Weltgeschichte." Another form of compromise to meet the well-recognized evil were the various historical series published. President Wilson's book* is a product of this reaction, unique in the respect that it is the first attempt, in recent years, of an American scholar to cover in a formal manner the entire field of American history. It is characteristic of him to make the attempt, for already a number of years ago, in his charming essay on Adam Smith, he deplored the narrow specialization of the day, claiming that "our thinking needs . . . men to fuse its parts, correlate its forces, and centre its results." "Without them and their bold synthetic methods," he said, "all knowledge and all thought would fall apart into a weak analysis." The utility, even the necessity of such broad works is undeniable. They unquestionably demand a higher order of ability than that manifested by the specialist. To write a satisfactory work of broad scope requires pre-eminent attainments,—a comprehensive and firm grasp of facts and a large mental outlook. It involves also an immense amount of labor, for the secondary material, on which it must to a large extent be based, has accumulated rapidly; and finally, it requires a complete mastery of method, as this secondary material has to be tested in the same rigid way as was the original material on which it rested. When success is so difficult, it is no wonder that failures are so frequent.

It was sound advice that a brilliant

* "A History of the American People." By Woodrow Wilson. Harper, 5 vols. \$17.50.

English critic gave, when he told us to estimate a book for what it is, and not to find fault with it because it is not something else. Obviously, it is impossible to adopt the same standpoint in evaluating a text-book, a self-confessed compilation, a scientific monograph, and a formal general history. Usually, the preface gives us some clue to the author's intentions. Here, however, unfortunately the preface is wanting. So, perforce, we have to rely on the publisher's circular and on the clue furnished by the title. From these it is legitimate to infer that Wilson has sought to do for American history what Green did for English history. Bagehot served as model in Wilson's work on Congressional Government; Green performs the same function now. While in his former work Wilson followed very closely Bagehot's spirit and method, his "History of the American People" differs radically in execution from Green's "English People." Green maintained that "political history, to be intelligible and just, must be based on social history in its largest sense," and this view he carried into practice. Priest, reformer, scholar, poet, and scientist figured in his pages side by side with warrior, statesman, and king, each in his way as an exponent of great forces in the nation's life. Not so with Wilson; his is a political history in which England and the colonial governments, and later Washington, always occupy the centre of the stage. Green gave us a history of civilization; Wilson has given us merely a history of political life, which is merely one phase of a people's activity. Beyond an occasional enumeration of names, no space is devoted to literature, art, science, religion, or scholarship. The book has unquestionably been misnamed; it is not a history of the American people.

There are in general two ways in which the political life of a people can be treated by the historian. He can, by an analysis of social forces and institutions, show how the past gave birth to the present. The interest in this method is centred on the state, on the people organized into a racial, re-

ligious, and economic entity. This is the scientific or philosophical method, and appeals primarily to the understanding. On the other hand, in some writers whose scientific impulse is less strong than is their artistic sentiment, we find a desire to visualize the past, to reconstruct it, and, by putting themselves in the place of the protagonists in the story, to get at the innermost workings of their minds. To such men history is primarily literature, closely akin to the epic, drama, and romance. The past appeals to them, not so much because it explains the present, but on account of the great men which it contained. Such historians were Carlyle and Froude, and such, on a more modest scale, is Wilson. He is pre-eminently an artist, not a scientist. He has reconstructed past politics as they appeared to people of the day, and his pages in consequence glow with life. He appeals through the emotions, and thus only mediately, to the intellect.

The question arises, whether or no such a narrative, life-like and vivid though it be, leads to an understanding of the past. In a certain sense it does, for it arouses our imagination and sympathy, and we are better able to understand the immediate reasons for certain measures and acts. But in a higher sense it explains nothing. The immediate and self-confessed motive for an act is rarely the underlying one. We may realize why men acted in a certain manner, but what were the great social and natural forces which conditioned their every action, of this it tells us nothing. It emphasizes the ephemeral and accidental, and ignores the permanent and normal features. Wilson is a political historian, and such historians, as Morley said, always seek "the superficial and immediate causes of great transactions."

In his effort to get at the standpoint of the time, he inevitably judges events with the eyes of the well-informed statesman of that day. He voluntarily abandons the vantage ground which the lapse of time affords him. One result of this attitude is his general tone of placid impartiality. In the great conflicts of the world there is but little

to choose between the individual morality of either victor or loser. When we study the men and not the movements, we naturally find little to blame. Wilson is neither a chauvinist nor a partisan. Nay, so far is he carried by his sympathy with the motives influencing men that in one instance, at least, he condones an attitude which seems clearly immoral. The treaty which recognized the independence of the United States contained certain clauses intended to secure the payment of debts due to English merchants and also to secure the restoration to the Loyalists of their confiscated property. After mentioning in detail the amount of the debt incurred by the Colonists in supporting their long war for independence, he says:

No wonder the men in responsible charge of public affairs in America rejected with a touch of bitter passion the demand of the treaty of peace, that they should in addition to all this, restore to the loyalists the property they had lost, and pay to British merchants debts which antedated the war.

As already stated, a mastery of method is not essential to the specialist alone, but also to the general historian. We do not expect such a writer to have an intimate acquaintance with all the sources, but we do demand of him a complete grasp of the secondary material. He must have digested and assimilated the mass of well-prepared material that is on hand. There is no excuse for misstatements based on a misunderstanding of a broad series of facts, and there is no excuse for purely mechanical reliance on other people's work. Let us cite an instance illustrating what we have in mind. Speaking of the early history of North Carolina, Wilson says (vol. i., pp. 252, 253):

Worst of all, the governor whom the proprietors had sent them sided with the King's officers in enforcing the Navigation Acts, whose enforcement would spoil their trade. They sold their timber and their cattle very freely to shrewd skippers out of New England, who brought them what they needed from the ports of the Puritan colonies, got their timber and cattle, disposed of them in the West Indies, and came back again thence with good cargoes of sugar, rum, and molasses, for

which they took tobacco, to be sold at home for export into England,—all without license from the crown and in plain defiance of the Acts.

This statement is remarkable, not only because all the transactions mentioned were in no way in contravention of the Navigation Acts, but also because a few pages farther on Wilson gives a fairly accurate outline of the commercial legislation that bound together the Colonies and the mother country. He either wrote this passage without thinking,—unfortunately, the writing of history requires thought,—or he does not understand the economic relations that existed between England and her American plantations. Though Wilson has no footnotes and furnishes us with no guidance, it will be interesting to go farther, in order to see the origin of this passage. In Prof. William J. Rivers's account of the Carolinas, published in Justin Winsor's "Narrative and Critical History" (vol. v., part. i., p. 295) we read:

The New Englanders, with their characteristic enterprise, had long been sailing through the shallow waters of the Sound in coasting vessels, adapted to such navigation, and had largely monopolized the trade of North Carolina; buying or trafficking for lumber and cattle, which they sold in the West Indies, and bringing back rum, molasses, salt, and sugar, they exchanged these for tobacco, which they carried to Massachusetts and shipped thence to Europe without much regard to the navigation laws.

This selection (itself taken almost literally and without acknowledgment from Hawks's "North Carolina," vol. ii., p. 470; cf. also *ibid.*, p. 264) bears close resemblance to the excerpt from Wilson. The difference, however, between the two should be noted. Rivers, or rather Hawks, is accurate. The clause "without much regard to the navigation laws" refers only to the tobacco being shipped to Europe, which is here used as opposed to England. It was legal to ship tobacco to England, in fact it had to be shipped there; it was illegal to ship it to the Continent. Wilson, by substituting England for Europe and by making the illegality refer to all the transactions, distorts

the whole meaning. At first glance it would appear that the connection between the two is a close and immediate one; we have reason, however, to believe that it is only indirect and mediate. In John Fiske's "Old Virginia and Her Neighbors" (vol. ii., p. 281) we read:

Ships from Boston and Salem brought down to Albermarle Sound all manner of articles needed by the planters, and took their pay in cattle and lumber, which they carried to the West Indies and exchanged for sugar, molasses, and rum. Often with this cargo they returned to Albermarle and exchanged it for tobacco, which they carried home and sent off to Europe at a good round profit, in supreme defiance of the statutes.

John Fiske was likewise a scholar whose capacity for assimilation was greater than was his power of production; he also, at times, relied mechanically on the results of his predecessors. Though he does not cite Rivers or Hawks as an authority, the connection between the two passages is patent. This has, however, no bearing on the question at issue now. It appears from a close examination of the three excerpts that Wilson's statement was derived from Hawks or Rivers through Fiske. This is apparent from the general context and from the fact that the construction of Wilson's and Fiske's statements is similar. In addition, both omit the commodity "salt," which appears in Hawks's and Rivers's statements. There is, besides, other evidence for taking this view. In the reign of Charles II. a statute was passed in virtue of which certain colonial products could be exported only to England and her colonies. These were the so-called "enumerated" commodities, and among them was "cotton-wool," the ordinary term of the day for raw cotton. By omitting the hyphen and putting in its place a comma, Fiske (*op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 46) adds another commodity to the list. Instead of "cotton-wool," we have cotton and wool. Wilson (vol. ii., p. 16), evidently relying on Fiske, goes one step farther, omitting cotton and mentioning only wool. He is a great admirer of Adam Smith, and could have

avoided this error by a closer study of those pages wherein the great economist explained the principle underlying the policy of enumeration.

It is not necessary to comment on this method of writing history. It reminds us forcibly of the *bon mot* made at the expense of a well-known French historian, that he wrote with his pen in one hand and Sismondi's work in the other. It is such slipshod mechanical, uncritical work that subjects American scholarship to the unfortunately all too just strictures of a Münsterberg.

Having now seen in general the nature of Wilson's work, let us turn to his handling of the different periods. As a whole the treatment of the colonial period is the weakest. Here we find the loosest control of facts, not alone from the standpoint of accuracy, but also from that of literary form. The narrative is at times involved and confused, and many of the sentences are poorly constructed. The period from the recognition of independence to the election of Jackson is, on the other hand, by far the most satisfactory. In this section we have some brilliant character drawing. Jefferson's nature has never been so tersely summed up as it is in the following words: "He deliberately practised the arts of the politician and exhibited oftentimes the sort of insincerity which subtle natures yield to without loss of essential integrity." Equally commendable is Wilson's account of the War of 1812. This episode is treated in proper perspective to the larger contest, the great duel between England and France, on which the fate of civilization seemed to hang. Barring verbal changes, the fourth volume, covering the years 1829 to 1865, is nearly identical with the text-book entitled "Division and Reunion" that Wilson published a decade ago. There is, however, one important addition to it, the chapter on the Confederate States, which is the only social history which the work contains. This chapter seems to be based primarily on Professor Schwab's scholarly monograph. It was well worth while to instil a breath of life into that heap of material, thus

rendering Professor Schwab's labor of years accessible to the general reading public. The last volume takes us from the Civil War through the Reconstruction era down to the second election of McKinley. These years, however, hardly lend themselves to historical treatment. We are beginning to get ready to look upon Reconstruction impartially; we have hardly approached that attitude when we arrive at events so recent as is the Spanish War.

We have still left for discussion the question whether or no Wilson contributes anything to the already existing knowledge of the subject which he treats. This is, after all, the final test of a book. While, from an abstract standpoint, the whole course of historical development does exist absolutely outside of our perception of it, still all our knowledge of this development is subjective, and, as each historian has his individual characteristics, it follows that each history must inevitably bear the imprint of the author's mind. As has been crudely, but forcibly, said, history must have at least one "twist." Minds with any elements of originality and force must necessarily view the same facts in a slightly different light, and we must expect from such men, reviewing the whole course of our national development, some new ideas, some new grouping of facts, an accentuation of some line of development peculiar to each one. It would be difficult to point out anything new in view-point or in ideas for which we are indebted to Wilson. Beyond a slight shading here and there, the prevailing views reappear unaltered in their fundamentals and in their details.

We have stated above that Wilson is primarily an artist. He is already known for his remarkably attractive style. To him a book, above all else, must be readable. He strongly believes in the "literary method," as he

calls it, not alone in scientific works, but also in the lecture-room. The aphorism of a French critic, "*le style, c'est l'homme*," has a sound substratum of truth, for a man's style, if it really be a style, must inevitably correspond with the character of his intellect. Wilson's style is that of the man of letters, of the artist, not that of the scientist. It closely resembles the French classical manner of writing, what Taine calls "*le style oratoire, régulier, correct, tout composé d'expressions générales*." Wilson is by birth a Southerner, and his style appears to be typically Southern, with its characteristics reinforced by many years of lecturing. Like the French classical, the Southern style is a result of pre-existing social conditions. In the South before the war, oratory was practically the sole medium of intellectual expression. The essence of successful oratory lies in appealing to the emotions, to sentiment, rather than to cold reason. This is the fundamental characteristic of Wilson's writings. It corresponds closely to his intellectual nature, and is admirably adapted for the description of the human element that is in past politics, and this is the subject which seemingly interests him most. He suggests, rather than defines; we gather impressions, not clear-cut conceptions. He gives us the atmosphere rather than the sharply drawn general lines. What his style lacks is precision; he seems unable to formulate a conception concisely. It is a style ill-adapted for the treatment of legal, institutional or economic questions, but these questions Wilson does not discuss in his book. It will be apparent that such a style has a distinct charm. Its very vagueness, its tendency toward general rather than specific statements, and the consequent absence of detail make Wilson's work pre-eminently comprehensible and readable.





Books of To-Day and Books of To-Morrow

DEAR BELINDA:

From all that I have heard from people of fashion, the works of art and grace by Mrs. Glyn are many, but the literary works of Mrs. Glyn are in two volumes, and no more. I say this at once because Mrs. Glyn, at the very outset of her new volume, "The Reflections of Ambrosine," says that some critics have dared say that the authoress of "The Visits of Elizabeth" wrote the parodies of her own books. Mrs. Glyn appears to wince under parody. Her publisher doubtless takes a more favorable view of such criticism. It is the ambition of many writers less known than Mrs. Glyn to be parodied. To be parodied is to argue celebrity, and when you are a celebrity, people, from feelings of humility and insignificance alone, will drop their forks even at the Carlton when you enter late. Of course, such fame has its penalties, but the penalties of being well known sink into nothingness beside those of not being known at all. People of fashion, who write in the *Daily Mail* of titled Mauds and Cynthias and the colors their ladyships favor, couple Mrs. Glyn's name with these, and say that the authoress of "Ambrosine" looked like a peacock. Can the same be said of any other English authoress? But life, as Mrs. Glyn is fond of pointing out in her books, is full of compensations. And to the young it cannot be too often insisted that, as long as they avoid being dramatic, they can be perfectly happy even if they never secure either a cake of Pears' Soap or even the admiration of small boys and of newspaper paragraphers. "The Reflections of Ambrosine" are not the

reflections of a long mirror, but the philosophical reflections of a pretty woman. The philosophy of a pretty woman is a religion in itself. England is full of pretty women, many of whom are philosophers, and they are, therefore, badly dressed. Some, however, are artists as well; and those who are both philosophers and artists are much sought after by mere men, which includes all publishers.

We read Mrs. Glyn for her philosophy, and not so much for her story. "Ambrosine" is full of counsels for the New Year. I could have found no better book about which to write this month. The characters in "Ambrosine" are mostly of this world, and they are neither very good nor very bad. They are, therefore, unhappy; for the happy are only those who are either very bad or very good. To be good is much cheaper than to be bad. To be very good you need only a very small income; hence, no doubt, the large number of good people to be found in the middle classes. To be bad requires a large income. Mrs. Glyn's characters all say sententious things, and as a text-book of love-making as well as of etiquette I know of few books so handy for such as require them. I will give a few specimens of the love-making from "Ambrosine."

Considering his love for Paris, the income of the Duke of Myrlshire was inadequate. The Duke contemplated matrimony, and thought that he preferred "a healthy brewer's daughter." He did not care much for English ways; he said that the English "were crude in their vices." "I won't have

an American," he said, "because they are intellectual companions before marriage only." What they were after marriage he thought would not bear contemplating, but he feared that they suffered from undigested guide-book matter, and that they were too statistical. The Duke was sure that his blood was much too blue, and that his family was over-well-bred. He admitted that later representatives had become "reedily shaped and more or less idiotic." His grandfather, the tenth Duke, "was one of the greatest politicians and *littérateurs* of his time," but had been in the Guards when a boy, and after having tasted the best of most things in life, "Robert," he said, "I can tell you there are only two things worth having—women and fighting."

The Duke, in his confidential discussions with Ambrosine, determined that his Duchess should be a solid English cow-woman, who would have numbers of chubby children, and who would never go into a rest-cure or have a longing for sympathy. Meanwhile the Duke played around with no very serious intent, and he found Ambrosine a pleasant companion, and good to look at. He knew something of the language and manœuvres of love-making, and in his flirtations with Ambrosine he soon came to that point in the great game of hearts where the man remarks, "The side of your face is even prettier." This remark is understood to be one which rarely fails to produce a most favorable impression. One of Ambrosine's "reflections" was, "None of the people I have met since my marriage have seemed to think it possible I should care for Augustus [her husband], or that my wedding-ring should be the slightest bar to my feelings or their advances." The Duke in another conversation admitted his partiality for "every one being two and two—every one with a friend," and he agreed that it would be necessary to label some people, "Trespassers will be prosecuted"; "A change would be welcome."

Another capable maker of love in Mrs. Glyn's book is Sir Antony

Thornhirst, who is reported to have once said that it had taken him five years to degrade himself sufficiently to be able to enjoy the society of the modern woman. Sir Antony is really the wicked Baronet in Mrs. Glyn's pages. All successful stories have a wicked Baronet. Why are Baronets so very wicked in books and plays? Ambrosine gave Sir Antony every encouragement, and on one occasion she said, when in his company alone, "We are dawdling by the fountain, where are the woods?" Sir Antony Thornhirst's voice was "most refined," and its tones were "deep." His clothes, too, had such an attractive aroma about them. Sir Antony has a house party at his country place, but only Ambrosine turns up. It was such a foggy night! They dine alone. Some parts of the conversation on this occasion hardly do credit to the experience expected to be shown by the average wicked baronet. The Duke did better. The Baronet tells Ambrosine that her hair is "mud-colored," and this she, of course, resents. With the modern lady the safer course is to avoid any reference to the hair. You may look and look again admiringly at her hair, and, at the same time, sigh gently, but certainly you should not speak out unless you are sure the hair is really growing as luxuriantly as it appears. However, on the night of this large party of two "a spirit of *coquetterie*" came over Ambrosine, and she pulled out two tortoise-shell pins and allowed her hair to tumble down. "The eyes of the Baronet 'swam.'" His servants, we are assured by Mrs. Glyn, were well trained, and so they did not come in to make up the fires just then. Ambrosine's husband was Augustus Gurrage, a *parvenu*, who was drunk for the most part, but on this occasion was amusing himself in town, having "missed his train."

In old-fashioned books, says Mrs. Glyn, there were rows of stars when the author found any situation too difficult to describe. There are no stars used in describing this extremely social evening which Ambrosine spent alone with Sir Antony Thornhirst.

As Mrs. Glyn uses dots freely, it would be well for her to explain their absence on page 266 and their presence on page 128.

Another character in Mrs. Glyn's new book has amused me much. This is a little woman with light hair, "like a young fluffy chicken." She is known as "Babykins." Babykins has a lisp and an infantile voice, and everything she wears is marked "Babykins." She has chain bracelets with "Babykins" in sapphires and diamonds. "On her handkerchief 'Babykins' again stares at you. Even the corner of her chemise, which showed through her transparent blouse, had 'Babykins' embroidered on it." We are not told if "Babykins" had a home or a husband, but we may hazard a guess that her home was in Leicestershire, but that her husband was not.

When the Duke of Myrlshire was discoursing upon human nature, he quoted "Babykins" to prove that "What we call morality has no existence in the natural world." . . . "Babykins," he said, "has a theory that the food we eat makes a difference in the ways of our class. . . . It is because we hunt and shoot, and live lives of inclination, not compulsion, like the middle classes, that we get back nearer to nature."

I have left until late any references to a lady who plays a very leading part in Mrs. Glyn's book. This is "Grandmamma," a courtly old lady of ninety, who is an artist to her finger-tips (which she manicures); so much is she an artist that she dies at quite the right

moment for the story to develop, on lines recently laid down as quite proper in hunting centres. Grandmamma said that a woman should look straight as a dart, supple as a snake, and proud as a tiger lily. Grandmamma's criterion of the male was, that he should "look like a man and behave like a gentleman." "Let nothing in life put you out of countenance," she said; and added, that "in a public place, unless the exigencies of politeness require one to come into contact with people, one ought never to be aware that there are anything but tables and chairs about." As for walking, "a gentlewoman should give the impression that the ground is hardly good enough to tread on." Grandmamma also said that a lady, however poor, should wear fine linen, even if she has only one new dress a year. She calls the stuff worn by most people "sail cloth." Grandmamma had a favorite maxim that one ought never to be called good-natured. "One might as well write oneself down a noodle at once." "Rebel, if you can improve matters, but otherwise accept with calmness," was another of her axioms. How valuable would have been Grandmamma's views upon mental healers, mind cures, and Christian Scientists! It will be seen how large and important a part is played by Grandmamma in Mrs. Glyn's book. The volume might have been called "Glyn-ings from Grandmamma; or, Counsels for the New Year."

Your friend,

ARTRUR PENDENYS.

LONDON, January, 1903.



The Book-Buyer's Guide

The reviews in this department of THE CRITIC, though short, are not perfunctory. They are as carefully written as though they appeared in the body of the magazine. Books on special subjects are sent to specialists, and often as many as a dozen different writers review the various books. Among those who contribute regularly are Cornelia Atwood Pratt, Rev. Charles James Wood, Prof. N. S. Shaler, Admiral S. B. Luce, Fennette Barbour Perry, Gerald Stanley Lee, Christian Brinton, Ruth Putnam, P. G. Hubert, Jr., Carolyn Shipman, Edith M. Thomas, Dr. William Elliot Griffis, and the editor.

ART

Abbey-Greenslet—The Quest of the Holy Grail. An Interpretation and a Paraphrase of the Holy Legends. By Ferris Greenslet, Ph.D. With Illustrations from the Frieze Decoration in the Boston Public Library by Edwin Austin Abbey, R.A. Curtis & Cameron. \$5.00.

For a volume whose obvious aim has been to offer a series of reproductions after Mr. Abbey's paintings, accompanied by appropriate letterpress, the present work has one vital shortcoming. The illustrations are so bad that the book's reason for being is perilously obscure. Certain studies of single figures or detached groups are acceptable, but the finished compositions are so dark and so small in size as to be almost indecipherable.

Cole—Old English Masters. Engraved by Timothy Cole. With Historical Notes by John C. Van Dyke, and Comments by the Engraver. The Century Co., \$8.00.

In this hour of the insidious half-tone, it is with a sense of relief and of gratitude that one turns to the engravings of Timothy Cole. For luminous fidelity of treatment, for delicate accuracy of line and the power of suggesting brushwork, mass, and even color values, these transcriptions rank with the finest made after paintings of any school. Mr. Cole catches with equal felicity the ruddy dignity of Raeburn's "Lord Newton" or the volatile grandiloquence of Turner's "Dido Building Carthage"; he everywhere exhibits variety, resource, and reverence for the original, and it is a rare pleasure to welcome another series of engravings from his hand.

Professor Van Dyke's "Historical Notes" reflect, as usual, all that is best in musty and platitudinous art criticism.

Fornaro-de Pourtales—Millionaires of America. Caricatures by Carlo de Fornaro and Max Cramer de Pourtales. The Medusa Pub. Co. \$3.00.

These dozen caricatures vary in merit, and there is a strong family likeness between the work of M. de Fornaro and that of his associate, but they are clever, satirical, full of close observation, and are unquestionably diverting.

Geffroy and Alexandre—Corot and Millet. By Gustave Geffroy and Arsène Alexandre. Special Winter Number of *The Studio*. Illustrated. Lane. \$2.00, net.

The special midyearly issues of *The Studio* have invariably proved a delight to art lovers, and the current number forms no exception to the rule. It is devoted to two of the simplest and greatest artists of the century just past—two, who, though their vision of reality differed widely, have certain essentials in common. They were both idealists, the one idealizing the poetry of outward things, the other the prose; they share the same inheritance, but unfold it in opposite terms. While M. Geffroy and M. Alexandre throw no new light on the modest draper who dreamed, even to the end, of landscapes with skies "all roses, and clouds all roses too," or on the solemn peasant lad whose "Reaper" "might have reaped the whole earth," both critiques are informed by ample sympathy, knowledge, and appreciation. M. Geffroy's paper on Corot is the longer and more biographical, while M. Alexandre's is the more analytical. Each represents French aesthetic interpretation in a characteristic phase, and both afford opportunity for the inclusion of a series of reproductions which for beauty and variety compel complete admiration.

Stone—Book-Plates of To-Day. Edited by Wilbur Macey Stone. Illustrated. Tonnelé & Co. \$1.50.

The reproductions of numerous book-plates attain a sufficiently high standard of excellence; the letterpress is by different hands and is of unequal merit.

BELLES-LETTRES

Chesterton—The Defendant. By G. K. Chesterton. Dodd, Mead & Co. \$1.25.

Mr. Chesterton is a man to make glad the heart of his critic. He has ideas, and he condenses them to an essay—an epigram. Some day the public will perhaps buy his books. But the day may be long in coming; for the public, as is well known, has a distaste for ideas, and demands that the man who cannot refrain from them shall at least spread them thin.

Hillis—The Quest of Happiness. By Newell Dwight Hillis. Macmillan. \$1.50.

It is with astonishment that one reads: "The

great minds, from Homer and Paul down to Shakespeare and Browning, have without exception been the children of exultant joy as well as genius; and every statesman and jurist of the first rank of greatness has been an optimist, sane, sweet, wholesome, healthy, and happy." Although joy may be found on some of the pages of the authors mentioned, it certainly is not a predominant quality with any one of them. As for some other "great minds," such as Dante, Milton, Goethe, Carlyle—unmentioned here by Dr. Hillis—to detect their joyfulness would need a powerful microscope. Of the merry though great statesmen, Dr. Hillis seems to remember none just at this critical moment, when we should have liked to hear who they were. However, if we may come to the author's assistance, we will cite the happy Cromwell, the sweet Napoleon, the optimistic Caesar, and the wholesome Frederick the Great. The contemplation of these is undoubtedly conducive to good humor, which, we take it, has much to do with happiness. Another cause for smiling is given by the announcement, during the quest for happiness, that Handel composed symphonies. And Homeric laughter (note the concession to Dr. Hillis) must overwhelm the reader who finds, upon page 288, that: "In the library of the Vatican is a copy of the works of Dante written out in long-hand by Plutarch." Is this notion not supremely blissful? Surely one need seek no further for happiness, unless, indeed, one should crown one's felicity by the purchase of the book. It can all be had for a dollar fifty.

Mabie—Works and Days. By Hamilton W. Mabie. Dodd, Mead & Co. \$1.00.

Mr. Mabie has many sides, and there is not one of them that he does not turn, some time during the twelvemonth, to our admiring gaze. "Works and Days" reveals a phase that many of his readers have come to care for more than any of the others—the gentle, unassuming, yet keen-sighted preacher, presenting in clear, simple language the duty of every man to himself and to his neighbor.

Mead—Word-Coinage. By Leon Mead. Crowell. 45 cts.

This booklet should be read backwards. For it is in the introduction that the author informs us how "the preponderance of opinion [of authors questioned by Mr. Mead] is against the promiscuous coining of new words." Immediately follows Mr. Mead's own opinion, that "the convictions they have expressed should have weight with all tyros in literature and serve to warn those who have passed through their novitiate against the practice." But what of the reader's opinion? Whether he has read this treatise backwards or forwards, his conclusions are likely to be as vague as those of Mr. Mead, in spite of the hundreds of new words cited for emulation or—terrification.

Perry—A Study of Prose Fiction. By Bliss Perry. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.25.
A reprint of lectures delivered at Princeton

University, and dealing with the art of fiction rather than its history. It discusses the relations of fiction to poetry, the drama, and science, and then considers characterization, plot and setting, realism and romanticism, the short story, and the present tendencies of American fiction. An appendix gives suggestions for study, bibliography, topics for study, review questions, etc. The book, however, is intended for the general reader no less than the student.

Spectator—Seen by the Spectator. Outlook Co. \$1.00.

The things seen by the Spectator are too well known to need introduction here. Like most good things they were more attractive, perhaps, when appearing from week to week in tantalizing bits than when gathered into a respectable book and sold for a dollar. But why quarrel with good things? We have not so many that we can spare even one.

Thoreau—Life Without Principle. By Henry David Thoreau. With a short biography of the author by Ralph Waldo Emerson. Published for subscribers at the sign of the Hop-Pole, Eden Bridge, which is in Kent, England. \$1.00.

This little booklet is a reprint made in the manner of Mr. Mosher's books, which is equivalent to saying that it is a very pretty piece of typography.

BIOGRAPHY

Eastman—Indian Boyhood. By Charles Eastman. McClure, Phillips & Co. \$1.60.

Dr. Eastman had the good fortune to be educated by an Indian grandmother under the old régime. The process seems to have been not unlike that undergone by any white boy who may have had the good fortune to be educated by his grandmother fifty or more years ago; namely, a thorough training in truth-telling, self-control, respect for one's elders, and reverence for the Great Spirit. The Indian boy had perhaps an advantage over the boy bred in the house, in that he lived closer to nature; but the book reveals with startling clearness the essential oneness of human nature. It gives the poetry of boyhood wherever lived. Accidents of color, race, and custom sink into their rightful place.

McClure—Recollections of Half a Century. By Colonel Alexander K. McClure. Salem (Mass.) Press Co. \$3.00.

The reminiscences of a man who is already well known by several books on American biography, history, and travel, and who has had a wide acquaintance with men prominent in political and public life during the past fifty years.

Rochester and other Literary Rakes of the Court of Charles II. By the author of "Sir Kenelm Digby," etc. Longmans, Green & Co. \$4.80.

A kind of literature that is not very worth

while. Trivialities are sometimes wonderfully illuminating in the midst of weightier matter, but alone they are tiresome. The best things in this volume are from Pepys, and he can be found elsewhere. The literary achievements of Rochester and his fellow-courtiers are not important.

Roscoe—Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford. By E. S. Roscoe. Putnam. \$2.50.

"A Study of Politics and Letters of the Age of Anne" (to quote the secondary title), as well as the biography of a man, who, if not a great man in the more emphatic sense, played a prominent part in public life, having been prime minister from 1710 to 1714, and intimately associated with many literary men of the period—Swift, De Foe, Prior, Arbuthnot, and Gay among the number—and of lasting reputation as the founder of the Harleian collection of manuscripts, now one of the most valuable possessions of the British Museum. Swift intended to write the life of his friend, and asked the second Earl of Oxford to assist him in collecting materials for the work; but the plan was never carried out, and no biography of Harley has been published until now. De Foe was released from Newgate through the intercession of Harley, who later was himself a prisoner in the Tower for two years on the charge of high treason, which utterly failed to be maintained, and he was finally acquitted by the House of Lords. The book is well illustrated, mostly with portraits, and, unlike many works of the kind, has a particularly good index of sixteen double-columned pages.

Simpson—Life of Ulrich Zwingli. By Samuel Simpson. Baker & Taylor Co. \$1.25.

We like this "Life of Ulrich Zwingli" very well. It is written in a calm spirit and a clear manner. The author, though his sympathies incline towards Zwingli, yet speaks throughout of the Switzer's eminent antagonist, Luther, with complete respect. Mr. Simpson has, in fact, a strong sense of justice, a quality usually absent from theological affairs,—combined with, and perhaps partly proceeding from, a careful study of the many sides of the subject. No doubt a book written by a bigot having good literary abilities is apt to be more convincing than one like this; but faith is the worst possible guarantee of truth. Mr. Simpson makes interesting comparisons between Luther and Zwingli, and sets forth their differences of doctrine with lucidity.

Stoddart—Recollections of a Player. By James H. Stoddart. Century Co. \$1.80.

The reminiscences of an actor in his seventy-fifth year, who has known the leading men and women of the stage on both sides of the ocean almost from his first appearance on the boards in his childhood, could not fail to be of more than ordinary interest to his professional brethren and to the general reader, the more because the author writes so simply and naturally. Mr. William Winter contributes a

prefatory note, in which he aptly describes the book as "the cursory record of a good life, the natural expression of a lovable character, and an illuminative side-light upon an old theatrical period." It is copiously illustrated with portraits, facsimiles of old play-bills, etc.

Thwaites—Daniel Boone. By Reuben Gold Thwaites. Illustrated. Appleton. \$1.00.

In "the typical backwoodsman of the trans-Alleghany region," the author of this volume in the series of "Historical Lives" has dealt with a singularly picturesque character; and old and young will heartily enjoy the story of his romantic career as hunter, explorer, and fighter of the Indians, and of his creditable service in his later years as magistrate and legislator.

Thwaites—Father Marquette. By Reuben Gold Thwaites. Appleton. \$1.00.

The selection of the scholarly editor of the "Jesuit Relations" as the biographer of the most attractive of the Jesuit missionaries in New France was an admirable one. There is no one better equipped for the task. The result is a pre-eminently readable and authoritative, though popular, life-history of Père Marquette, the co-discoverer with Joliet of the upper reaches of the Mississippi River. In case a second edition is called for, the introductory chapter on the history of the Marquette family should be revised; Mr. Thwaites should look up Luchaire for information about the communes, and abandon, with the balance of the historical world, the discarded views of Thierry. The statement (p. 5) that the first of the Marquettes was a follower of Louis VII., and that his son served under John, who reigned two hundred years later, is obviously an error.

Vincent—Molière. By Leon H. Vincent. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 85 cts.

In the present slender volume Mr. Vincent continues his thumb-nail studies in French society and letters of the 17th century.

Whipple—Lights and Shadows of a Long Episcopate. Being Reminiscences and Recollections of the Right Rev. Henry B. Whipple, Bishop of Minnesota. Illustrated. Macmillan. \$2.00.

While this book contains much other matter of interest to the personal friends of the good bishop and to churchmen in general, its chief value and significance is the record of his labors among the Indians of the Northwest and the light which it throws upon Indian conditions and Indian problems. These topics, indeed, furnish the bulk of the volume; and the appendix (of some 170 pages) is entirely devoted to them. The red man has had no friend more zealous and energetic, no advocate more earnest and eloquent.

FICTION

Alcock—Under Calvin's Spell. By Deborah Alcock. Revell. \$1.50.

Even among late historical romances there are differences, and this is one of the better class. There is good work in this and good points. It will not be a waste of time to read it, and the reader will get a certain idea of the conditions obtaining in Geneva during the sixteenth century, an idea with much of the truth, if not all.

Anstey—A Bayard from Bengal. By F. Anstey. Appleton. \$1.25.

Anstey loves fantastic conceptions of situations. This account of the adventures of a native in London society, told in the turgid English of another native, has its good points. The use of language is certainly well caught, but it is not very interesting. Some of the parables of Piljosh are, though—especially the notes. "People tell me he can shine when he chooses," said the Extinguisher of the Candle. "All I know is, he's positively dull whenever he's with me," is applicable to many situations.

Banks—Oldfield. A Kentucky Tale of the Last Century. By Nancy Huston Banks. With illustrations (in color) by Harper Pennington. Macmillan. \$1.50, net.

This tale of the Pennsylvanian region of Kentucky, with its opening chapter descriptive of the little sisters, Miss Judy Bramwell, aged fifty years, and Miss Sophia, strongly suggests "Cranford." To lovers of the miniature method in fiction, the detail of these ladies' lives, the doings of old Lady Gordon and her grandson, the hero, the dancing lessons of Doris Wendall and the vagaries of her mother, will be good reading.

Cholmondeley—Moth and Rust and Other Stories. By Mary Cholmondeley. Dodd, Mead & Co., \$1.50.

The present reviewer did not read Miss Cholmondeley's "Red Pottage," so comparison of style and ability is impossible. Two of the four stories are here reprinted, "Geoffrey's Wife" from the *Graphic* and "Let Loose" from *Temple Bar*. The situations are all rather unusual, and the psychology shows quite intimate knowledge of human nature. There is nothing forced about the development of character or plot, and even the climax in "Geoffrey's Wife," horrible though it is, might easily have happened in real life. Janet in "Moth and Rust" is an excellent example of good stupidity uselessly clinging to a principle through lack of imagination. Readers who are tired of historical novels and garden fiction—and their number is legion—will enjoy the problems in this book.

Ellis—The Holland Wolves. By J. Breckenridge Ellis. McClurg. \$1.50.

If Stanley Weyman's novels be Dumas and water, what term is sufficiently expressive of insipidity to describe the unhistorically ro-

mantic productions of Weyman's little followers who come limping after him, pen in hand? Little can be said of this particular example of the class. A few phrases known to have been uttered by Alva and other personages in the years of disgrace 1568-1572, when his sway was paramount in the Netherlands, a few names, a few characters so destitute that they have not sufficient flesh and blood to clothe them decently even for the pages of a twentieth-century historical novel, a few threadbare situations and a few impossible ones. Such are the ingredients of "The Holland Wolves."

Hobbes—Love and the Soul Hunters. By John Oliver Hobbes. Funk & Wagnalls. \$1.50.

One never knows exactly what Mrs. Craigie's titles mean, and to remember them, even for a week, is quite impossible. But one always feels safe and sure of her guidance in matters worldly and psychological, so that a certain distinct pleasure attends the reading of her novels, aside from interest in the story. There is nothing definite in one's mind as to who the soul-hunters are in this last novel, but that does not matter. The principal thing is to get the run of the characters. This is a most disturbing and exciting performance, for it can't be done. They are here, there, and everywhere, and the moment you think you've nailed one, you look,—and he is not there. It's another that you've never seen before.

Mrs. Craigie's epigrams, dialogues, and point of view would save almost any story. The spelling of "dialog" and "altho," adopted by her publishers, must offend her eyes, trained to English "honour" and "favour." Some people like ivy on houses and some prefer plain bricks. It is all a matter of taste.

Hutten—Our Lady of the Beeches. By the Baroness von Hutten. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.25.

The charm of "Our Lady of the Beeches," which appeared first serially in the *Atlantic Monthly*, is increased by the concentration of its chapters into book form. The letters interchanged between an American woman, married to an Austrian nobleman, and a noted American scientist, in one of whose books she became interested, give way in the latter part of the book to a narrative of their accidental meeting in the Maine woods through the unconscious agency of two old servants. The letters are possibly the more interesting part of the book, suggestive as they are of Merrimée's "Lettres à une Inconnue"; but as a whole the atmosphere is charmingly refined and elusive. The situations are unconventional, but not the actions, and the little story ends as most of such episodes in life end. The husband never really dies.

Kobbé—Signora, a Child of the Opera House. By Gustav Kobbé. Russell. \$1.50.

There is such a thing as making the identity of the characters in a novel too plain, thus

writing biography instead of fiction. Mr. Kobbé, for instance, tells us all about Planky, the tall, handsome, French basso cantante, who was such a favorite at the Sunday-night concerts, and about Madame Caravé, the greatest living impersonator of Carmen. Madame Nortona and Mrs. Emma also come upon the scene in scant disguise, likewise Galéza and Grispham, to say nothing of Edouard and Jean. The publisher has gone further still, for he has put pictures into the book—reproduced from familiar likenesses taken by New York photographers—of some of these very singers. The pictures in "Signora" are mostly hideous. The text is full of defiance of the French and Italian tongues. "Salve di Mora," "Silencio," "Aviso Importante" are supposed to be Italian; "Les Rameux" and "*gardrobiers*" are imagined to be French; "Le Parlate d'Amour" is actually a mixture of both. Even the hero's name is uncertain: on the last page but one he is called "Plankey" and also "Planky." The story is told with vivacity and a neat sense of humor, but is highly improbable, no part of it more so than the ending.

Lewis—Wolfville Nights. By Alfred Henry Lewis. Stokes. \$1.50.

- We are heartily glad to take another excursion with Mr. Lewis to Wolfville, that Texan community of wild, woolly, and delightful memory. Of course, no cowboys, deputy marshals, horse thieves, or poker experts ever talked with the epigrammatic causticity which Mr. Lewis puts into the mouths of his amusing characters. Nor was such a parcel of ingenious blackguards ever seen together in one small town. But some exaggeration is allowable in the writing of fiction, as much, at least, as will help to produce a plausible illusion and artistic results. And as Mr. Lewis's stories meet both these requirements of good fiction, let us be satisfied.

Nesbit—The Red House. By E. Nesbit. Illustrated by A. I. Keller. Harper. \$1.50.

Cover, print, and illustrations make "The Red House" attractive before the story is begun. Two impecunious married English lovers, artistic and literary, living in a band-box of a house, suddenly find themselves possessed of a hundred pounds a year and a big house with grounds and a moat, and all the accompanying possibilities. Their youthful exuberance and sense of humor carry them over every obstacle, and make life appear one long play-spell. The moral is: Marry when you're young.

Roberts—The Kindred of the Wild. By Charles G. D. Roberts. Page & Co. \$2.00.

They are doubtless our kindred and they are surely wild; and were it not for the fact that the kindred business, as well as that of the wilderness, is being a little overdone these latter days, one might enjoy, even more than

he now feels called upon to do, this elaborate, illustrated account of Nature and her doings.

White—The New Christians. By Percy White. The Federal Book Co. \$1.25.

In "The New Christians" Mr. White shows the same power of characterization as in "The West End." His last book is a clever satire on what he calls "Christian Pathology Teachers," *i. e.*, Christian Science. The smooth scamp of a leader of the New Christians, Eustace Fenner, author of "Spiritual Evolution," and editor of "Torch of Faith and Science," is contrasted with John Selby, a cynic with "acrid humor and massive selfishness," who shows him up to his devoted disciple, the beautiful Mrs. Galbraith. Mr. White puts his finger on a very far-reaching truth when he makes Fenner say to Mrs. Galbraith in his farewell to her, "It is women like yourself, who cultivate credulity as though it were one of the fine arts, who are chiefly to blame for such failures as mine. We try to live up to what you can believe. The false prophet finds his disciples ready made. He takes his doctrine from them, and a new fad, ready made, begins to walk the earth whenever he breathes upon it."

HISTORY

Abbot—American Merchant Ships and Sailors. By Willis J. Abbot. Dodd, Mead & Co. \$2.00.

The author has the faculty of treating large subjects in what is known as the "popular" style. The present volume takes a very wide range. Starting with early shipbuilding in America and the provincial sailor, the reader is carried through a variety of phases of sea life till finally the weather-beaten and improvident seaman is safely landed in Sailor's Snug Harbor, Staten Island, N. Y., established through the beneficence of Captain Robert R. Randall, himself an American sailor of the old type. Between these extremes the reader is treated to short discourses on the transition from sails to steam; the Slave Trade; the Whaling Industry; Privateering; Arctic Exploration; Lake Navigation; the River Trade of the Mississippi; New England Fisheries; the Light-House Service, and the Revenue Marine, not to mention various minor topics. The author is not always as accurate as becomes a serious historian. "The War of 1812 was won," he tells us, page 170, "so far as it was won at all, on the ocean." We have long since learned, and have acquired the moral courage to admit, that it was not won at all.

In the Preface it is stated that "it was a glorious deed to win the battle of Santiago, but Fulton and Ericsson influenced the progress of the world more than all the heroes of history." Such a flight of fancy is enough to taint any book with the suspicion of inaccuracy.

On the whole, the book contains much interesting matter and will well repay reading.

Fiske—New France and New England. By John Fiske. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.65.

This posthumous volume to some extent fills the gap in that notable series in which Fiske describes the colonial period of our history. As it is certain that the volume would not have gone to the printer in its present shape had the author lived, it would be invidious to criticise the general scheme of the work,—the lack of proportion and the omission of vital points. Although the subject indicated by the title is only very inadequately covered, the book will be read with great interest. Fiske has never written more impartially than in the account of Braddock's defeat, never more dramatically than in the story of the fall of Quebec, and never more critically and judiciously than in the admirable chapter on the witchcraft tragedy in Salem Village.

Hosmer—History of the Expedition of Captains Lewis and Clark, 1804-5-6. Reprinted from the edition of 1814, with introduction and index by James K. Hosmer, LL.D. 2 vols. McClurg. \$5.00.

It is nearly a century since Lewis and Clark made their way from sea to sea and caught sight of the Pacific as they sailed down the Columbia River. They were intelligent both in their observation and their records, besides having the luck to be first in the field. Dr. Hosmer has rendered good service by his republication of their journals from the old edition of 1814 to which Thomas Jefferson contributed a sketch of Captain Lewis. Strange to think that the purpose of this journey was to explore Louisiana, the enormous tract with which Napoleon had juggled. This he forced Spain to cede to him in exchange for an Italian province, his intention being to erect a French colony on the Mississippi. Impending war in 1803 made transatlantic complications hazardous, and in a short time after his acquisition he was anxious to be free of it and to be assured that it should not fall to the English. American envoys sent to Paris with \$2,000,000 to buy New Orleans and Florida were invited rather peremptorily to take Louisiana too at \$15,000,000. And they accepted the proposition on their own responsibility. Thus the territory was acquired, but what lay within and beyond that vast area no white man knew and it was to find out and also to support a measure for which his administration was held responsible, that President Jefferson despatched his young secretary, Lewis, with his friend Clark, on their perilous journey. It would be very interesting if, in 1904, their exact course could be retraced and conditions compared.

Stokoe—With Napoleon at St. Helena. By Dr. John Stokoe, Naval Surgeon. Translated from the French of Paul Frémeaux by Edith S. Stokoe. Lane. \$1.50.

The captivity of Napoleon at St. Helena lasted from October, 1815, to May, 1821, and Dr. Stokoe was there only from June, 1817, to September, 1819, but his narrative contains

much fresh matter in addition to what has been given by O'Meara, Las Casas, Antommarchi, Montholon, and others. It is, therefore, a noteworthy contribution to the ever-increasing mass of Napoleonic literature.

MISCELLANEOUS

Butler—The Story of Athens. By Howard Crosby Butler, Lecturer on Architecture at Princeton University. Century Co. \$2.40, net.

As the secondary title informs us, this attractive book is intended to be "a record of the life and art of the City of the Violet Crown, read in its ruins and in the lives of great Athenians"; and the plan is well carried out. Topography, archaeology, art, history, and biography are skilfully blended and copiously illustrated from photographs and drawings made by the author. The result is a volume that the tourist in Greece will find a capital supplement to the standard guide-books, while the general reader will enjoy it as an entertaining yet scholarly epitome of the history and description of the architectural remains of the ancient city and of the men who made it forever famous.

Clegg—The International Directory of Book-sellers and Bibliophiles' Manual. Including Lists of the Public Libraries of the World, Publishers, Book Collectors, Learned Societies and Institutions, Universities and Colleges, etc. Edited by James Clegg. Dodd, Mead & Co. \$1.50.

Although more complete and reliable—and hence more valuable—to publisher, bookman, book-buyer, reader, or critic than ever before, this Directory is not so strictly *International* as it might well be. Anglo-Saxon centres are fully represented, but Continental cities are often scantily covered, Norway being given but two towns, Bergen and Christiania, and Russia (including Finland and Poland under the one head) being allotted but sixteen communities where books are sold.

Lovell—Stories in Stone from the Roman Forum. By Isabel Lovell. Macmillan. \$1.50.

This seems to be an attempt to explain the history and meaning of the chief edifices and monuments of the Forum. The writer is by no means deficient in knowledge of the subject, but one could wish for a better arrangement of the matter. The book does not form a concrete, well co-ordinated whole, and therefore does not leave a sufficiently definite impression.

Mead—Milton's England. By Lucia Ames Mead. Page & Co. \$1.60.

Mrs. Mead has succeeded in giving a graphic picture of the England, and particularly the London, into which Milton was born and in which his life was mostly spent. In the metropolis, between 1608 and 1674, he lived in no less than twelve different houses, residing meanwhile for some sixteen years at Cam-

bridge and Horton, with a visit to the Continent. The tourist of to-day who could follow the poet through his homes and haunts will find the book a useful and entertaining guide and companion; and the reader and student at home will enjoy it hardly less. The many illustrations from sources old and recent are excellent and well chosen.

Riis—The Battle with the Slum. By Jacob A. Riis. Macmillan. \$2.00.

While certain books have only dealt with the prosperous, this takes the other half of society as the author did before to good result. Terrible as are the pictures given of conditions still existing within our community, the note of this volume is distinctly optimistic. Mr. Riis thinks that many were really "driven into decency," and that the good work of turning the desolate, swarming region into something more like human habitations goes on progressively, even if there be apparent retrogression. Certainly, though even with his glow of pleasure in what the Gilder Tenement-House Commission set on foot, Mr. Riis makes it clear that there is much to be changed still. How slight seems the veneer of romance, of pride in the city's past, when a vigorous hand paints pictures of part of the city's present, a present of horror that ought never to have been allowed to form a portion of a modern civilized community! 2781 persons in the space of an East-side block! "Looking back over the years that lie behind with their work and forward to those that are coming I see only cause for hope." And we can only trust that Mr. Riis knows whereof he speaks. Meanwhile we have his delicious "Unnecessary Story" as one consolation for his tale of woe.

Wharton—Social Life in the Early Republic. By Anne H. Wharton. Lippincott. \$3.00, net.

Mrs. Wharton's books on "Colonial Days and Dames," and the social life of that earlier period in our national history are so well and widely known and enjoyed that this continuation of her favorite studies in the early Republican days that followed will be heartily welcomed, and the more because the times with which it deals have been less written about than those that preceded. The chapter on "Jeffersonian Simplicity" is particularly interesting, and amusing withal. The illustrations are reproductions of contemporary portraits, miniatures, and residences, the majority of the subjects being the women who were prominent in the society of the day.

Williams—New York Sketches. By Jesse Lynch Williams. Scribner. \$2.00.

This book shows New York in the present. But this time it is the picturesque present as it can be found even in the untoward condition of our overwrought-upon town. It is good to remember that we still possess redeeming features of beauty. Eighty-four little sketches, some of them exceedingly charming, show up New York's good points.

It would be a capital gift to send to a foreign friend who might have heard tales of our seamy side or of our hollow holes, without forming an adequate idea of New York in reality.

Wilson—New York Old and New. Its Story, Streets, and Landmarks. By Rufus Rockwell Wilson. Lippincott. 2 vols., \$3.50.

Verily this Island of Manhattan is exposed to the danger of being snowed under by the showers of works scattered broadcast by her chroniclers, her eulogists, and her critics. Plentiful has been the crop of local commentaries. The above-named is a fair type of one species of these city histories. In the main it is composed of gleanings from more ponderous and elaborate works. Mr. Wilson devotes the first volume to the civic development of the city from the first settlements around the fort to the end of the Civil War. The story is fairly well told, without a single touch of originality. Nor is there evidence that the values of the secondary sources were weighed. Extracts are given from Mrs. Lamb, who certainly permitted her pen to wander into pleasant details where verification is impossible. The excuse for being of this "New York" is that the whole story is thrown together and the reader can follow the growth of modern Gotham from its Dutch origins. In the second volume the localities are described, also without any particular new light or originality. Still some of the personal touches tacked on to places are fresh, as, for instance, a letter from Margaret Fuller when she was the guest of Horace Greeley. Of her host she says, "His abilities in his own way are great. He believes in mine to a surprising extent. We are true friends,"—a sequence delightfully suggestive of a select mutual-admiration society.

POETRY AND VERSE

Carleton—Songs of Two Centuries. By Will Carleton. Harper. \$1.50.

When Will Carleton adheres to his text, say in "The Old Christmas Dinner" and "Uncle Jake's Thanksgiving," he falls but little short of being as acceptable as he was in the days of his earliest ballads; but when he essays to celebrate "The Eclipse," and

A gleaming sun, well hoisted up the sky,
or to enter upon an apostrophe to—well, anything, he gives us the shivers. Mr. Carleton's sense of poetic proportion has not grown with the passing of the years.

Hanscom—Love, Laurels, and Laughter. By Beatrice Hanscom. Stokes. \$1.20.

Miss Hanscom is a latter-day troubadour in petticoats. She trills blithely, and her songs are welcome. She has few airs, but many graces. She represents the Muse out for a holiday, and, were we invited, we should vastly like to make one of the company. "Love, Laurels, and Laughter!" alluring alliteration!

Leland and Prince—Kulóskap the Master, and Other Algonquin Poems. Translated by Charles G. Leland and John D. Prince. Funk & Wagnalls. \$2.00.

Those who cry aloud for American poetry that is really American will find it in this curious collection of Indian legends connected with the demigod Kulóskap, and dealing with animals, nature, love, witchcraft, and romance, often not without a certain savage humor. Even the illustrations are based upon native designs. The translations are in an unrhymed metrical form, intended to give the effect of the original style.

Peattie—Poems You Ought to Know. Selected by Elia W. Peattie. Jamieson-Higgins Co. \$1.50.

For several months past the Chicago *Tribune* has published at the head of its first column a poem under the title, "Poems You Ought to Know." With each poem a few lines of biography were given. These poems, which were selected by Mrs. Elia W. Peattie, the literary editor of the *Tribune*, have been collected and published in an attractive volume. Mrs. Peattie has evidently not made the selection according to any hard-and-fast rule, but simply to give the newspaper-reading public something good in the way of poetry every day. Even if it were a poem it was familiar with, or one that it did not know so well, it made no difference; as long as the poem was good and worth while it had the place of honor on the *Tribune's* first page. It is a popular anthology, and one much more likely to be read than those of more pretensions, which only find their way to library shelves. The selections are made with a catholic taste, and will appeal to a large circle of readers.

RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

Smith—Externalism: A Theory of Infinite Justice. By Orlando Y. Smith. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.25.

Indisputable, well-worn facts are by the author set forth, with copious quotations from sages and philosophers, to lead up to his theory—also not new—that "Nothing exists without compensation." We were not, he also says, arbitrarily created, with instincts and inclinations ready made, as religion claims. And we are not, as materialism avers, to be annihilated when we breathe our last. Science knows nothing of either creation or annihilation in nature. There never was a beginning out of nothing, and that which exists cannot be reduced to nothing. "Since there has been no creation, design is impossible," writes Mr. Smith. "And since everything is subject to law, chance is also impossible."—so that *nothing exists without compensation*. But in order that this be true, that the freedom and likewise the responsibility of man be assured, that the universe be morally governed, the soul of man must be endowed with pre-existence and after-existence. The soul never began and never perishes. The infinite justice of God is therefore a reality.

TRAVEL

Bayne—On an Irish Jaunting-Car. By Samuel G. Bayne. Harper. \$1.25.

The record of a tour by the author and his friends on a jaunting-car, mostly through the less-travelled rural districts of Ireland, giving more of the life and habits of the peasantry than we generally get from such books, and the more entertaining on that account. The illustrations are equally unhackneyed, being from photographs taken *en route*.

Colquhoun—Two on their Travels. By Ethel Colquhoun. Barnes & Co. \$2.50.

An agreeable account of a honeymoon trip to the far East—Ceylon, Java, Borneo, the Philippines, Japan, Korea, and Siberia, with Russia on the way home. Illustrated by colored plates and others in black and white by the author, both text and pictures being good in their way.

Kielmansegge—Diary of a Journey to England in the Years 1761, 1762. By Count Frederick Kielmansegge. Longmans, Green & Co. \$2.00.

Particularly interesting as giving the impressions of a German traveller in England almost a century and a half ago, recorded in a familiar way for his friends at home. He saw the coronation of George III., the London society of that day, and much of life and manners in other parts of the country. The diary is now translated by the wife of his great-great-grandchild, the present Count.

Lumholtz—Unknown Mexico. By Carl Lumholtz. 2 vols. Scribner. \$12.00.

It would seem quite incredible that in the northwestern part of Mexico, not far from the borders of our own country, there should be a region never visited by tourists, and foreign even to the Mexicans; a region where tribes of cave-dwellers are still to be found, to whom the outside world is as completely unknown as they are to it. The volumes before us contain the record of five years' exploration in this *terra incognita*, and, though of special interest to the ethnographical student, it cannot fail to attract the unscientific reader as a story of travel in a strange land and among strange people. The work is profusely illustrated with photographs of the scenery and the natives, their residences, their pottery and woven fabrics, their rock paintings and other art products—everything, almost, that one could see with his own eyes if he could explore the district for himself. A marked trait of the people is their extreme "religiosity." Their entire life is continuous worship of their gods. Every act is influenced by their faith, every feature of their art is sacred in its significance. A *padre* once said to the author: "The Indians have too much religion, and they want more than is good for them." In all respects they are a fascinating study, and one who begins to read about them will find it difficult to lay aside the volumes until he finishes them.

Library Reports on Popular Books

The following lists are of the books most in demand during the month previous to the 5th of the present month, at the circulating libraries, free and subscription, in the representative centres of the United States and Canada. They have been prepared, in each case, at the request of the editors of THE CRITIC by the librarians of the libraries mentioned, or under their personal supervision. This record is intended to show what books other than fiction are being read, though the one most-called-for novel is admitted to the list.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

- Mechanics' Institute Free Library.** H. W. PARKER, *Librarian.*
 Unknown Mexico. Lumholtz. (Scribner, 2 vols., \$12.00.)
 Essays, Historical and Literary. Fiske. (Macmillan, \$4.00.)
 Memoirs of a Hundred Years. Hale. (Macmillan, 2 vols., \$5.00.)
 The Life of the Bee. Maeterlinck. (Dodd, Mead & Co., \$1.40.)
 Social Life in New York under the Georges. Lucas. (Appleton, \$5.00.)
 Life of William Morris. Mackail. (Longmans, Green & Co., 2 vols., \$7.50.)
 The American Revolution. Fisher. (Lippincott, \$2.00.)
 The Life of Napoleon. Watson. (Macmillan, \$2.25.)
 Royalty in all Ages. Dyer. (Scribner, \$3.00.)
 Battle with the Slum. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)

Most Popular Novels.

- The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)
 John Ermine. Remington. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

Mercantile Library. W. T. PEOPLES, *Librarian.*

- Three Years' War. De Wet. (Scribner, \$2.50.)
 Unknown Mexico. Lumholtz. (Scribner, 2 vols., \$12.00.)
 The Uganda Protectorate. Johnston. (Dodd, Mead & Co., \$12.50.)
 All the Russias. Norman. (Scribner, \$4.00.)
 Through Hidden Shensi. Nichols. (Scribner, \$3.50.)
 Grand Duchess and her Court. Gerard. (Dutton, \$7.50.)
 Madame Pompadour. Williams. (Scribner, \$7.50.)
 The East of To-Day and To-Morrow. Potter. (Century Co., \$1.00.)
 Varieties of Religious Experience. James. (Longmans, Green & Co., \$3.20.)

- Onlookers' Note-Book. Russell. (Harper, \$2.25.)
 Reflections of Ambrosine. Glyn. (Harper, \$1.50.)

Most Popular Novel.

- The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)
Society Library. F. B. BIGELOW, *Librarian.*
 Varieties of Religious Experience. James. (Longmans, Green & Co., \$3.20.)
 Three Years' War. De Wet. (Scribner, \$2.50.)
 The Battle with the Slum. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)
 The Poetry of Browning. Brooke. (Crowell, \$1.50.)
 A Doffed Coronet. Author of "Martyrdom of an Empress." (Harper, \$2.25.)
 Essays, Historical and Literary. Fiske. (Macmillan, \$4.00.)
 Reign of Queen Anne. McCarthy. (Harper, \$4.00.)
 Recollections of a Hundred Years. Hale. (Macmillan, \$5.00.)
 Social New York. Singleton. (Appleton, \$5.00.)
 Letters from Egypt. Duff-Gordon. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$2.50.)

Most Popular Novel.

- The Intrusions of Peggy. Hope. (Harper, \$1.50.)

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Brooklyn Public Library. FRANK P. HILL, *Librarian.*

- The Battle with the Slum. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)
 History of the Nineteenth Century Year by Year. Emerson. (Dodd, Mead & Co., 3 vols., \$4.00.)
 Recollections of a Long Life. Cuyler. (Baker & Taylor, \$1.50.)
 Literature and Life. Howells. (Harper, \$2.25.)
 Border Fights and Fighters. Brady. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.50.)

History of Education. Kemp. (Lippincott, \$1.50.)

New France and New England. Fiske. (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., \$1.65.)

All the Russias. Norman. (Scribner, \$4.00.)

With Napoleon at St. Helena. (Lane, \$1.50.)

Three Years' War. De Wet. (Scribner, \$2.50.)

Most Popular Novel.

The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

Pratt Institute Free Library. M. W. PLUMMER, *Director.*

Varieties of Religious Experience. James. (Longmans, Green & Co., \$3.20.)

Talks to Teachers. James. (Holt, \$1.50.)

The Life and Letters of Phillips Brooks. Allen. (Dutton, 3 vols., \$8.00.)

Recollections of a Long Life. Cuyler. (Baker-Taylor, \$1.50.)

All the Russias. Norman. (Scribner, \$4.00.)

Leaven in a Great City. Betts. (Dodd, Mead & Co., \$1.50.)

Times of Queen Anne. McCarthy. (Harper, \$4.00.)

Essays, Historical and Literary. Fiske. (Macmillan, \$4.00.)

George Eliot. Stephen. (Macmillan, 75 cts.)

Battle with the Slum. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)

Most Popular Novel.

The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

BRIDGEPORT, CONN.

Bridgeport Public Library. AGNES HILLS, *Librarian.*

The Battle with the Slum. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)

Memories of a Hundred Years. Hale. (Macmillan, 2 vols., \$5.00.)

Sundials and Roses of Yesterday. Earle. (Macmillan, \$2.50.)

Japan. Menpes. (Macmillan, \$6.00.)

My Life in Many States and in Foreign Lands. Train. (Appleton, \$1.25.)

'Tween You an' I. O'Rell. (Lothrop, \$1.20.)

The Simple Life. Wagner. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.25.)

New England and its Neighbors. Johnson. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)

In City Tents. Herrick. (Putnam, \$1.00.)

New France and New England. Fiske. (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., \$1.65.)

Most Popular Novel.

The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

CHICAGO, ILL.

Chicago Public Library. FREDERICK H. HILD, *Librarian.*

Innocents Abroad. Clemens. (Amer. Pub. Co., \$3.50.)

On the Great Highway. Creelman. (Lothrop, \$1.20.)

The Boer Fight for Freedom. Davitt. (Funk & Wagnalls, \$2.00.)

Abroad with the Jimmies. Bell. (Page, \$1.50.)

Up from Slavery. Washington. (Doubleday, Page & Co., \$1.50.)

The Life of the Bee. Maeterlinck. (Dodd, Mead & Co., \$1.40.)

The Story of Mary MacLane. MacLane. (Stone, \$1.50.)

The Making of an American. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)

Lives of the Hunted. Thompson-Seton. (Scribner, \$1.75.)

Life on the Stage. Morris. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.50.)

Most Popular Novel.

The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

CLEVELAND, OHIO.

Cleveland Public Library. WM. H. BRETT, *Librarian.*

Varieties of Religious Experience. James. (Longmans, Green & Co., \$3.20.)

The Simple Life. Wagner. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.25.)

The Strenuous Life. Roosevelt. (Century Co., \$1.50.)

The Wonderful Century. Wallace. (Dodd, Mead & Co., \$2.50.)

Napoleon. Watson. (Macmillan, \$2.25.)

The Making of an American. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)

True History of the American Revolution. Fisher. (Lippincott, \$2.00.)

Fighting a Fire. Hill. (Century Co., \$1.50.)

Just So Stories. Kipling. (Doubleday, Page & Co., \$1.20.)

Red Fairy Book. Lang. (Burt, \$1.50.)

Most Popular Novel.

The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

DETROIT, MICH.

Detroit Public Library. HENRY M. UTLEY, *Librarian.*

A Doffed Coronet. (Harper, \$2.50.)

The Simple Life. Wagner. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.25.)

The Quest for Happiness. Hillis. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

- Autobiography of a Newspaper Girl. Banks. (Dodd, Mead & Co., \$1.50.)
 'Tween You an' I. O'Rell. (Lothrop, \$1.20.)
 My Life in Many States. Train. (Appleton, \$1.25.)
 The Battle with the Slum. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)
 Tennyson. Lyall. (Macmillan, \$1.00.)
 Sundials and Roses of Yesterday. Earle. (Macmillan, \$2.50.)
 Two Winters in Norway. Spender. (Longmans, Green & Co., \$2.50.)
Most Popular Novel.
 The Two Vanrevels. Tarkington. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.50.)

HELENA, MONT.

- Helena Public Library.** MARY C. GARDNER, *Librarian.*
 Poems (various volumes). Field.
 Boy Problems. Forbush. (Pilgrim Press, 75 cts.)
 The Simple Life. Wagner. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.25.)
 Education and the Larger Life. Henders n. (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., \$1.30.)
 Nature Study and Life. Hodge. (Ginn & Co., \$1.50.)
 Treasure of the Humble. Maeterlinck. (Dodd Mead & Co., \$1.75.)
 Lives of the Hunted. Thompson-Seton. (Scribner, \$1.75.)
 The Voice and Spiritual Education. Corson. (Macmillan, 75 cts.)
 Kindred of the Wild. Roberts. (L. C. Page & Co., \$2.00.)
 Point of Contact in Teaching. Du Bois. (Dodd, Mead & Co., 75 cts.)
Most Popular Novel.
 The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

JERSEY CITY, N. J.

- Free Public Library.** ESTHER E. BURDICK, *Librarian.*
 Talks to Teachers on Psychology. James. (Holt, \$1.50.)
 The Strenuous Life. Roosevelt. (Century Co., \$1.50.)
 The Empire of Business. Carnegie. (Doubleday, Page & Co., \$3.00.)
 The Real Siberia. Fraser. (Appleton, \$2.00.)
 Observations of Mr. Dooley. Dunne. (Russell, \$1.50.)
 Heroines of Fiction. Howells. (Harper, \$3.75.)
 Old Bergen. Van Winkle. (Harrison, \$2.00.)

- The Simple Life. Wagner. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.25.)
 Character Building. Washington. (Doubleday, Page & Co., \$1.50.)
 Books on Trusts
Most Popular Novel.
 The Two Vanrevels. Tarkington. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.50.)

KANSAS CITY, MO.

- Public Library.** CARRIE WESTLAKE WHITNEY, *Librarian.*
 Essays, Addresses, and Orations of J. J. Ingalls. (Hudson-Kimberley, \$2.50.)
 True History of the American Revolution. Fisher. (Lippincott, \$2.00.)
 In God's Out of Doors. Wm. A. Quayle. (Jennings & Pye, \$2.00.)
 Children of the Wild. Roberts. (Page & Co., \$2.00.)
 Color Problems. Vanderpoel. (Longmans, Green & Co., \$5.00.)
 Essays, Historical and Literary. Fiske. (Macmillan, 2 vols., \$4.00.)
 Books on Poems of Browning.
 Three Years' War. De Wet. (Scribner, \$2.50.)
 The Citizen in his Relation to the Industrial Situation. Potter. (Scribner, \$1.00.)
 Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch. Hegan. (Century Co., \$1.00.)
Most Popular Novel.
 The Battle Ground. Glasgow. (Doubleday, Page & Co., \$1.50.)

LOS ANGELES, CAL.

- Los Angeles Public Library.** M. L. JONES, *Librarian.*
 Up from Slavery. Washington. (Doubleday, Page & Co., \$1.50.)
 Facts and Comments. Spencer. (Appleton, \$1.20.)
 Wayfarers in Italy. Hooker. (Scribner, \$3.00.)
 Works. Van Dyke. (Scribner.)
 Books on the "Missions" of California.
 The Making of an American. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)
 Garden of a Commuter's Wife. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)
 Sailor's Log. Evans. (Appleton, \$2.00.)
 The Life of R. L. Stevenson. Balfour. (Scribner, 2 vols., \$4.00.)
 Games. Hoyle. (Dick, \$1.50.)
Most Popular Novel.
 The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

Minneapolis Public Library. J. K. HOSMER,
Librarian.

- The Empire of Business. Carnegie. (Doubleday, Page & Co., \$3.00.)
The Strenuous Life. Roosevelt. (Century Co., \$1.50.)
Life on the Stage. Morris. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.50.)
Culture and Restraint. Black. (Revell, \$1.50.)
Passing of the Permanent in Religion. Savage. (Putnam, \$1.50.)
Lectures. Stoddard. (Werner, \$25.00.)
Book of Secrets. Dresser. (Putnam, \$1.25.)
Books on Basketry and Weaving.
History of Mississippi Valley. Hosmer. (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., \$1.20.)
Facts and Comments. Spencer. (Appleton, \$1.20.)

Most Popular Novel.

The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Mercantile Library. JOHN ASHHURST, *Librarian.*

- The Battle with the Slum. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)
Unknown Mexico. Lumboltz. (Scribner, 2 vols., \$12.00.)
Through Hidden Shensi. Nichols. (Scribner, \$3.50.)
Essays, Historical and Literary. Fiske. (Macmillan, \$4.00.)
Three Years' War. De Wet. (Scribner, \$2.50.)
Varieties of Religious Experience. James. (Longmans, Green & Co., \$3.20.)
Facts and Comments. Spencer. (Appleton, \$1.20.)
The Strenuous Life. Roosevelt. (Century Co., \$1.50.)
The Unspeakable Scot. Crosland. (Putnam, \$1.25.)
Recollections of a Long Life. Cuyler. (Baker & Taylor, \$1.50.)

Most Popular Novel.

The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

Public Library. GEORGE T. CLARK, *Librarian.*

- Unknown Mexico. Lumboltz. (Scribner, 2 vols., \$12.00.)
All the Russias. Norman. (Scribner, \$4.00.)
Up from Slavery. Washington. (Doubleday, Page & Co., \$1.50.)
Three Years' War. De Wet. (Scribner, \$2.50.)

Literature and Life. Howells. (Harper, \$2.25.)
Wayfarers in Italy. Hooker. (Scribner, \$3.00.)

My Life. Train. (Appleton, \$1.25.)

Varieties of Religious Experience. James. (Longmans, Green & Co., \$3.20.)

The Battle with the Slum. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)

The Simple Life. Wagner. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.25.)

Most Popular Novel.

The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

Free Public Library. ANNIE E. CHAPMAN,
Librarian.

English Thought in the Eighteenth Century. Stephen. (Putnam, 2 vols., \$3.50.)

Literature and Life. Howells. (Harper, \$2.25.)

Modern Daughters. Black. (Scribner, \$2.50.)
Memoirs of a Hundred Years. Hale. (Macmillan, 2 vols., \$5.00.)

New Amsterdam and its People. Innes. (Scribner, \$2.50.)

Dickens as an Educator. Hughes. (Appleton, \$1.50.)

Dante and his Times. Federn. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$2.00.)

History of Mormonism. Linn. (Macmillan, \$4.00.)

Essays, Historical and Literary. Fiske. (Macmillan, 2 vols., \$4.00.)

Works on Shakespearean Criticism.

Most Popular Novel.

The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

City Library Association. H. C. WELLMAN,
Librarian.

Varieties of Religious Experience. James. (Longmans, Green & Co., \$3.20.)

The Simple Life. Wagner. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.25.)

Battle with the Slum. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)

The Strenuous Life. Roosevelt. (The Century Co., \$1.50.)

Emmy Lou. Martin. (McClure, Phillips & Co., \$1.50.)

Reign of Queen Anne. McCarthy. (Harper, \$4.00.)

Democracy and Social Ethics. Addams. (Macmillan, \$1.25.)

'Tween You an' I. O'Rell. (Lothrop, \$1.20.)

Onlooker's Note-Book. Russell. (Harper, \$2.25.)

The Empire of Business. Carnegie. (Double-day, Page & Co., \$3.00.)

Most Popular Novel.

The Virginian. Wister. (Macmillan, \$1.50.)

ST. PAUL, MINN.

Public Library. HELEN J. McCAINE,
Librarian.

The Empire of Business. Carnegie. (Double-day, Page & Co., \$3.00.)

The Making of an American. Riis. (Macmillan, \$2.00.)

The Cultivation of Personal Magnetism. Shaftesbury. (Wash. Col. Ass'n, \$4.00.)

Earth's Beginning. Ball. (Appleton, \$1.80.)

Our National Parks. Muir. (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., \$1.75.)

The Life of the Bee. Maeterlinck. (Dodd, Mead & Co., \$1.40.)

The Unspeakable Scot. Crosland. (Putnam, \$1.25.)

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FOUR
PORTRAIT-PHOTOGRAPHS

BY

EDUARD STEICHEN

M. MAETERLINCK MR. WILLIAM CHASE
MME. LE BLANC SELF-PORTRAIT



PORTRAIT OF MAURICE MAETERLINCK



PORTRAIT OF MME. GEORGETTE LE BLANC



PORTRAIT OF MR. WILLIAM M. CHASE



SELF-PORTRAIT: A STUDY

EDUARD STEICHEN

When Delaroche first saw one of Daguerre's new light pictures he shuddered and exclaimed, "Painting is dead!" Yet painting declined to expire; even the eloquent insipidity of Delaroche could hardly compass its demise. What the painter of the pallid "Princes in the Tower" did witness was not the death of one art, but the dawn of another. Though it has taken photography decades to evolve individual expression, to free itself from the mechanical taint, it to-day unquestionably ranks among the arts. In the guise of Mr. George Bernard Shaw the photographer has lately enlisted an august champion. Mr. Shaw flatly pronounces the camera superior to the brush. In future he will have himself photographed for the delectation of posterity. He will never again confide his countenance to the ineffectual mercies of mere portrait painter. The results recently achieved in the New Photography by M. Demachy, by Mr. Stieglitz, and by a younger and still more gifted spirit, Mr. Eduard Steichen, lend validity to Mr. Shaw's attitude. If corresponding progress is made during the next few years it may be possible, without paradox, to prefer accurate and inspirational photographs to dubious and cumbersome portraits. What the photograph formerly lacked was the personal impress, the note of independent æsthetic feeling. It lacked not scientific truth, but qualities of selection, of psychological analysis. These essentials it reflects to a redeeming degree in the portrait-photographs of Eduard Steichen. With Mr. Steichen photography becomes a supple, responsive medium. It merely aids him in causing the head of Maeterlinck to loom with definite power against a background of mystery. It helps him to suggest the shrouded secrets, the veiled promises, of Mme. Georgette Le Blanc, or to give as subtly dextrous a version of Mr. Chase as the one-time apostle of Velasquez might well wish. In his own self-portrait the artist follows fact as well as that which in his nature transcends fact. The young man who thus widens the scope of graphic expression takes his art with manifest seriousness. He aims to leave behind a record in photography of the significant personalities of his time, and has already gone far toward accomplishing this end. Painter as well as photographer, he sees beauty in the caressing undulation of hills, in the enfolding benediction of eventide, and above all in the fragrant allure of woman and the furrowed brow of man. There is much that is stimulating in the idea that one can have a studio on the Avenue and, by taking photographs, can enrich the store of æsthetic pleasure. It is possible if the eyes wander often enough over house-tops toward a broken sky line or bend to appeals less distant and less elusive. The sum of art is perhaps, after all, but the sum of life. And here, as well as yonder behind the moon, gates are always ready to open upon secret gardens.

C. B.